

**An analysis of the tourism curriculum at Boland College: What the tourism industry in
Stellenbosch requires from entry level college employees**

by

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Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
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December 2013

DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Students graduate from Boland College after obtaining the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism. I have been working at Boland College Stellenbosch Campus as a tourism lecturer for 12 years and over the past few years I have found that students have been struggling to find employment in the tourism industry on completion of their studies.

The national tourism curriculum offered at FET colleges was implemented in 1995 with the last renewal in 2001 for selected subjects. The tourism industry, however, is a vibrant, ever-changing industry which stands in direct contrast with a static, needs-insensitive and unchanging curriculum.

The aim of this study was to establish in which respects the current national tourism curriculum corresponds, or does not correspond, with what the tourism industry in Stellenbosch requires from entry-level employees in terms of expected skills, knowledge and attitudes.

Qualitative methods were used to generate data from employers representing the tourism industry in Stellenbosch, graduates and lecturers from Boland College. Research participants were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. The data was analysed by doing verbatim transcriptions of the interviews, using coding and an Excel spread sheet analysis.

The results revealed specific areas where the current national tourism curriculum does not correspond with the expectations and needs that the tourism industry in Stellenbosch has from entry-level employees in terms of expected skills, knowledge and attitudes.

OPSOMMING

Studente ontvang 'n kwalifikasie in Toerisme nadat hulle die Nasionale Sertifikate N4 – N6 in Toerisme voltooi het. Ek werk die afgelope 12 jaar as toerismedosent by Boland Kollege Stellenbosch Kampus. Gedurende die afgelope paar jaar het ek gevind dat studente sukkel om werk te kry in die toerismebedryf nadat hulle hul studies voltooi het.

Die nasionale toerisme-kurrikulum wat by VOO Kolleges aangebied word, is in 1995 geïmplementeer en die laaste keer in 2001 hernu en boonop slegs in sekere vakke. Die toerismebedryf is egter 'n lewendige, vinnig-veranderende industrie in direkte teenstelling met die statiese, onveranderde kurrikulum wat oënskynlik nie sensitief genoeg is vir die behoeftes van die toerismebedryf nie.

Die doel van hierdie studie was om vas te stel in watter mate die huidige nasionale toerisme-kurrikulum ooreenstem, of nie ooreenstem nie, met wat die toerismebedryf in Stellenbosch verwag van intreevlak-werknemers in terme van verwagte vaardighede, kennis en houdings.

Kwalitatiewe metodes is gebruik om data te genereer en onderhoude is gevoer met werkgewers wat die toerismebedryf in Stellenbosch verteenwoordig asook geïnterviewdes en dosente van Boland Kollege. Daar is hoofsaaklik gebruik gemaak van semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude. Die data-analise het bestaan uit verbatim getranskribeerde onderhoude, die kodering daarvan asook 'n genoteerde Excel-ontledingstaat.

Die resultate van die studie dui op spesifieke aspekte van die nasionale toerisme kurrikulum wat nie ooreenstem met die verwagtinge en behoeftes wat die toerisme-industrie in Stellenbosch het van intreevlak werknemers in terme van vaardighede, kennis en houdings nie.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To God all the glory and honour.

To my parents,
Blackie and Ria Swart
for a lifetime of unconditional love, prayers, support and guidance.

To my supervisor,
Prof. Eli Bitzer
for countless hours of guidance, support, advice and patience.

To **Chris van Vuuren**,
for all the patience, support and coffee.

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Chapter 1: Orientation to the study

1.1 Introduction

I have been working at a local Further Education and Training College for 12 years as a lecturer in tourism. During this time at Boland College, Stellenbosch campus, the national tourism curriculum has not been updated or reviewed once. As the tourism industry is a vibrant one and constantly changing (Zehrer and Mossenlechner, 2009), it stands in direct contrast with a static, needs-insensitive and unchanging curriculum.

Youth unemployment is a huge challenge in South Africa. Several studies have aimed to establish the reasons for the collapse of the graduate labour market in South Africa (Kraak, 2010). It seems as if the labour market becomes increasingly demanding in terms of knowledge and skills required from entry-level employees (Chen and Gursoy, 2007). On the other hand, the market is becoming inundated with graduates from various institutions and disciplines, all of them applying for the same jobs. If the curriculum is not in line with what industry requires, how will students find employment? Breier (2001) refers to this aspect as responsiveness to the ‘outside world’ and states that "... [T]he move from elite to mass systems has been accompanied by growing pressures on higher education to be more responsive to the needs of the economy, the broader society and particular communities” (Breier, 2001:5).

The question of relevant curricula is important as the current official unemployment rate in South Africa is close to 26% (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2013). It is also important to note that 53% of those unemployed are between the ages of 15-24 (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2013). Many youths leave FET colleges with qualifications but fail to find jobs

(McGrath et al., 2006). Many educators and society in general ask why this is the case. Although many answers might be provided for this question, it seems vital to ensure that the national tourism curriculum corresponds clearly with what industry requires in order to be part of the solution and not contribute to a position whereby students cannot find employment.

According to Cloete and Butler-Adam (2012:5) the “...FET sub-sector must be expanded and strengthened in terms of its capacity, quality, curriculum development and successful teaching and learning, and thus also in terms of throughput rates.” In my experience as a lecturer at an FET College, the Department of Education struggles to synchronize efforts in order to expand the FET sector. It seems as if there are efforts to strengthen the sector by providing lecturer training, additional support for students in terms of tutors, and financial support for the expansion of facilities, but the issue of curriculum development is receiving limited attention.

An interesting comparative study amongst Vocational Education and Training Institutions in Southern Africa was completed in 2004 (Akoojee, Gewer and McGrath, 2005). In the study report McGrath (2005:8) wrote that “...the core function of VET¹ in promoting employment chances remains evident across the region and has resulted in a growing focus on the need for radical curricular overhaul and better relationships with the world of work”. There is thus evidence that, in order for FET colleges in South Africa to promote employment opportunities for their students, the education that these students receive must correspond with what the relevant industry requires from employees in terms of skills, knowledge and attitudes (McGrath et al., 2006). Against this background, this study aims to establish in

¹ Vocational Education and Training

which respects the current national *tourism* curriculum corresponds, or does not correspond, with what the *tourism* industry in *Stellenbosch* requires from entry-level employees in terms of expected skills, knowledge and attitudes.

1.2 Research problem

The research problem for this study originated from the researcher's experience and frustration with the challenges explained in the previous section during the past twelve years.

1.2.1 Background to the problem

In 2011 the Minister of Higher Education and Training in South Africa announced that he was going to reverse a decision to phase out NATED Report 191 programmes (commonly known as the N-courses) as a result of strong demand from the colleges and employers (Nzimandi, 2011). With this announcement the minister once again changed the future direction of FET colleges.

The national curriculum for N-courses (NATED Report 191) used in FET colleges was implemented in 1995. According to the Department of Higher Education and Training, no analysis, review or development of the curriculum has taken place since 2001², because the programmes were going to be phased out (Koen, 2011). Now, 12 years later, the curriculum implemented in 2001 is still being used at colleges³. An urgent review of the curriculum for all programmes is clearly long overdue. The Council for Trade and Occupation in

² The national tourism curriculum consists of 12 subjects. The syllabi for 5 subjects have not been updated since 1995. Three subjects were updated in 1998 and four in 2001.

³ Students enrolled at FET colleges write a national exam which inhibits ad hoc curriculum updates. If the curriculum (for example) states that the student must show the ability to make a travel booking educators can teach students to use the latest technology to reach this outcome. However, in the case of FET colleges, this is not possible due to the current national exam being based on the current national tourism curriculum and not necessarily on the latest developments in the industry.

partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training has agreed to jointly facilitate the process of updating portions of syllabi of certain subjects within the NATED Report 191 programmes – unfortunately only one subject of the national tourism curriculum (Travel Office Procedures N4) has been selected for this process (Peters, 2013).

According to Abrahamson (1978), a curriculum has to be dynamic, with a number of important characteristics: It is the product of planning and execution; it varies with its participants, including teachers and learners alike; it changes in subtle ways, even when it is apparently unchanging. In short, it goes beyond the concept of a static listing or description of its formal components. These characteristics are importantly related to a tourism curriculum, as the tourism industry is ever changing and dynamic (Chen and Gursoy, 2007). Unfortunately, discussions around possible changes to the current national tourism curriculum at FET colleges are focused around the inclusion or exclusion of knowledge in programmes (Le Grange, 2006).

1.2.2 The research problem

Boland College offers the National Certificates N4 – N6 (NATED Report 191 programme) in Tourism at its Stellenbosch Campus. The curriculum is pre-determined by the Department of Education and was implemented between 1995 and 2001 (depending on the subject). The tourism programme was first offered at Boland College Stellenbosch Campus in 1994. Since then the College has built up a reputation for providing well-trained, passionate individuals to work in the tourism industry. Initially students managed to find employment quickly and started their careers in the tourism industry with a willingness to learn and excel in their professions. Over the last few years, however, students have struggled to find jobs (see section 2.2.7). The inability of students to find jobs is not limited to the tourism industry.

Chen and Gursoy (2007:22) writes that some students do not find jobs because they have “... unrealistic career expectations, while others fail because the Leisure, Recreation and Tourism programme they attended could not prepare them for the ever-changing job market.”

This raises the issue of what Boland College can do to enhance the employability of students. By offering relevant programmes that are in line with what industry requires, it can produce graduates that are adequately equipped to start working in their chosen industry and are sent into the workplace.

Students that graduate at Boland College (after obtaining the NATED Report 191 N6-certificate in tourism) start working at entry-level positions in the tourism industry. In order to ensure that students can make a positive contribution to their working environment and society, they have to be able to function effectively. If Boland College offers programmes that are not aligned with the needs of industry, students may not be able to cope in the job market.

1.3 Aim of the study

1.3.1 Research purpose

In view of the research problem as outlined, this study aimed to establish in which respects the current national *tourism* curriculum (followed at FET colleges) corresponds, or does not correspond, with what the *tourism* industry in *Stellenbosch* requires from entry-level employees in terms of expected skills, knowledge and attitudes.

1.3.2 Research objectives

In support of the main study aim, the objectives of this study were stated as follows:

- To analyse the current national tourism curriculum.
- To establish the needs of the local tourism industry in Stellenbosch in terms of entry-level skills, knowledge and attitudes required of employees.
- To compare aspects of the current national curriculum to the needs expressed by prominent representatives of the tourism industry in Stellenbosch.

1.4 Research design

In Chapter 3 the research methodology used in this study is discussed in detail. The following few points, however, serve as summary of the research procedure. Ellis and Levy (2009:324) states that “...[T]he type of study one conducts is based upon three related issues: the problem driving the study, the body of knowledge, and the nature of the data available to the researcher”. Based on these three issues, as well as the aim of the study, I decided to use a programmatic case study design with document analysis and interviews to answer the research question (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2008).

1.4.1 Research question

The main research question that this study aimed to address was formulated as follows: *In which respects are the current national tourism curriculum (followed at FET colleges) aligned, or not aligned, with needs of the local tourism industry in Stellenbosch?*

1.4.2 Sub-questions

It was envisaged that the above research question would be answered by answering the following subsidiary questions:

1. What does the current national tourism curriculum require from tourism students at FET colleges?
2. What are the employer requirements of the local tourism industry in Stellenbosch in terms of entry-level skills, knowledge and attitudes required of employees?
3. How does the current nationally taught tourism curriculum compare to the needs expressed by prominent representatives of the tourism industry in Stellenbosch?

1.5 Research methods

This study made use of qualitative data as it “...involves analysing and interpreting texts and interviews in order to discover meaningful patterns descriptive of a particular phenomenon” (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003:1). In-depth interviews were conducted with respondents from the local tourism industry, graduates as well as current lecturers in the tourism curriculum. The data thus generated were recorded, analysed and interpreted in order to arrive at the findings and establish the conclusions of this study (Lichtman, 2006).

1.5.1 Sampling

The participants identified for this study included representatives from the following participant categories (see section 3.4.1):

1. Employers from the tourism industry in Stellenbosch that have employed graduates from Boland College in the past.
2. Graduates from Boland College who have completed the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism.
3. Lecturers from Boland College in Stellenbosch that currently lecture the subjects that form part of the national tourism curriculum.

I used purposive sampling (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2008) and informed judgment to select fifteen employers from the local tourism industry that represent various sectors of the tourism industry. These employers represented wine farms, accommodation establishments, a museum, information centre, travel agents and a tour operator⁴. Boland College has an ongoing relationship with these establishments as many students have been employed there during the years.

Eight graduates of Boland College were selected and the criteria explained above were applied. These graduates are currently working at tourism establishments in Stellenbosch and represent various sectors of the tourism industry. The six lecturers currently working at Boland College in the tourism department were approached to participate in the study.

1.5.2 Data collection

For data collection the study made use of semi-structured, face-to-face interviews. I prepared a questionnaire for use during the interviews consisting of three open-ended questions (see Addendum A). Additional questions were used to probe for additional information from respondents.

The data was transcribed by myself as researcher in order to ensure verbatim representation (see Addendum B). The responses of each respondent were coded in order to distinguish between them but without being able to identify them individually (see Addendum C).

⁴ The number and type of employers were selected in order to obtain perspectives of various stakeholders in the tourism industry but is also related to the type of establishments that the students mostly end up working at namely accommodation establishments, wine farms and travel agencies.

1.5.3 Data analysis

1.5.3.1 Data analysis of interviews

Transcribed data were analysed in order to identify emerging patterns that could be linked to the literature relevant to this study. This was a complex process that took a significant amount of time. The process of data analysis, as explained by Lichtman (2006) involves generating codes, organising these codes into categories or topics and relating these categories to concepts. Denscombe (2007) expanded on this by stating that the analysis process involves coding the data, categorising the codes, identifying themes and relationships and finally developing concepts or generalised statements. I decided to group the data into the following three categories: knowledge, skills and attitudes as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

1.5.3.2 Document analysis of the national tourism curriculum

The national tourism curriculum consists of 12 subjects (see Addendum D). The syllabus of each subject was analysed and the learning objectives of each subject listed. The assessment criteria were summarised and included. This was done in order to compare the data from interviews with the national tourism curriculum. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 4 of this study.

1.6 Validating the study

Denscombe's (2007) criteria for judging the quality of research were applied in this study which includes the validity, reliability, generalisability and objectivity of the study. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 of this study. To follow, some key quality aspects are highlighted.

1.6.1 Validity and credibility

Validity refers to matters of accuracy, appropriateness and whether a study measures what it claims to measure (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). A researcher has to ensure that the data obtained during a study is grounded extensively in fieldwork and empirical data as the validity of a study "...depends on the relationship of your conclusions to reality" (Maxwell, 2005:105). Credibility in qualitative research may be established through triangulation. In order to ensure triangulation for this study, employers, lecturers and graduates were selected as participants. Triangulation involves obtaining data from different sources in order to enhance the validity of the outcomes (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2008). This criterion will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

1.6.2 Reliability

Reliability of a study might be problematic to establish as it refers to a degree of consistency during a study (Merriam, 1991). When only one researcher is involved in a study, such as was the case here, how will it be established that the person was consistent in how the research process was conducted? I am convinced that my actions were reliable as the data obtained within this study shows many similarities from various respondents (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2008) - also referred to as internal consistency (Ellis and Levy, 2009). This criterion will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

1.6.3 Transferability and generalisability

Transferability ties in with external validity as discussed earlier. It is defined by Fraenkel and Wallen (2008:9) as "...[T]he degree to which an individual can expect the results of a particular study to apply in a new situation or with new people." Any claim to generalisability for this study would be problematic as this research was limited to one town

in one region and one institution (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003; Chenail, 2010). This issue will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

1.6.4 Trustworthiness

Opie (2004) writes about the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) that stated that trustworthiness involves credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Savin-Baden and Major (2010) also list these four aspects as criteria for trustworthiness. The first two aspects were discussed in sections 1.6.2 and 1.6.3 respectively whilst dependability and conformability will be discussed in Chapter 3.

1.7 Definitions of key concepts

The literature review and contextualization of this study are reported in the next chapter. By way of introducing such concepts, however, I would like to highlight a few background issues at this point.

As this study is focused specifically on the FET Sector and a curriculum situated within a tourism environment, literature seems limited. Obviously many authors write about issues within the higher education curriculum such as analysis, renewal and development. Authors also have written about many aspects with regards to the tourism industry such as bringing the classroom closer to the industry. The challenge for me was to identify authors that have written about the FET Sector in South Africa and specifically about needs analysis studies as part of a curriculum renewal process.

The FET Institute at the University of the Western Cape and authors listed during this study have published several articles, documents and research reports that were of much value to

this study. See for instance: Akoojee, Gewer and McGrath (2005); Breier (2001); Cloete and Butler-Adam (2012); Cloete (2009); Gewer (2000); Kraak and Hall (1999); Kraak and Young (2000); Le Grange (2006); McGrath (2005); Perold, Cloete and Papier (2012). This body of literature was most helpful in partly establishing the status quo in FET colleges.

Several government policies, reports, acts and other documents also have bearing on this study. Documents published by the Department of Higher Education and Training, the Council for Higher Education and the South African Qualifications Authority are examples. A few important documents with a bearing on the FET sector and its development released by the South African government during 2011/2012 include:

- The Department of Higher Education and Training's *Strategic Plan for Higher Education and Training 2010 – 2015* and *Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training*.
- The *New Growth Path* of the Economic Development Department.
- The *National Development Plan* of the National Planning Commission.

Key concepts

The following concepts or terms were key to this study as they relate to the study topic and are briefly explained below:

- National tourism curriculum: the national tourism curriculum that is referred to during this study encompasses the syllabi for the 12 subjects that form part of the Department of Higher Education and Training's Report 191 programme (formerly known as National Certificates) N4 – N6 in Tourism.
- Boland College: Boland College is one of 50 Public FET colleges in South Africa (Public FET colleges, 2013). Boland College consists of 5 main campuses:

Stellenbosch, Strand, Worcester, Paarl and Caledon. This study is situated in Stellenbosch as it is the only Campus of Boland College where the national tourism curriculum is currently offered.

- Tourism industry: according to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, tourism can be defined as the act of travel for the purpose of recreation (and many others) as well as the provision of services for this act. The tourism industry includes all stakeholders involved with the provision, development and regulation of these services (Understanding Tourism, 2013).
- Entry level employees: "...bottom-level employment in a firm which usually requires ordinary level of education, training, and experience qualifications. It gives a recruit the benefit of a gainful occupation, opportunity to learn and gain experience, and serves as a stepping-stone for higher-level jobs" (Business Directory, 2013).
- Knowledge can be defined as the understanding of something and the ability to use that understanding through study and experience (Hawkins, 2006).
- Skill at a task is the "...ability to carry out that particular task. Skills in the context of a company are the ability to do a particular job as specified by the employer" (Winch and Clarke, 2003:240).
- Attitude as a competency can include personality, taking pride in work, helping others, empathy, teamwork and creativity (Tesone and Ricci, 2006). Wang, Ayres and Huyton (2009) add enthusiasm, high emotional intelligence, etiquette and cultural differences to the list.
- Curriculum: many definitions of curriculum exist and are discussed in Chapter 2. One definition relevant to this study is from Billett (2006) who states that "...[T]he experienced curriculum is the only reasonable definition of a curriculum and "... that these bases are not reserved for what happens in workplaces or educational institutions

but can be applied and have meaning in social practices wherever participation in and the remaking of these practices occur” (Billett, 2006:32).

1.8 Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations with regards to this study are discussed in Chapter 3 of the study. As a student enrolled at the University of Stellenbosch I was subjected to the institutional ethical clearance processes and procedures before starting the study. This included getting approval for a research plan and for ethical clearance. I could only continue with the study once the approval notice was received from the Ethics Committee for Human and Social Sciences at Stellenbosch University. Every respondent that participated in the study was asked to sign a ‘Consent to Participate in Research’ document, ensuring that ethical research measures were adhered to.

1.9 Significance of the study

This research project clearly served only as a starting point for discourse between Boland College and the Department of Education about the content of the NATED (Report 191 programmes) curricula at FET colleges. In view of the findings of the study the report will be submitted to the Department of Higher Education and Training in order to request that the curriculum may be revised and adapted. The initial study can be expanded to other provinces and institutions in order to compare results and revise the national tourism curriculum as currently used.

Boland College obviously wants to continue offering a tourism programme that is relevant and corresponds with industry needs. Students should receive the best education possible before they start their careers. Employers will value the contribution made by Boland

College to the industry and in turn continue to assist students who have to complete in-service training with placements at their establishments. In order to ensure this takes place, the findings of this study may be of major importance.

1.10 Limitations of the study

There were particular limitations to this study, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

1.11 Findings of the study

The findings of this study are discussed in detail in Chapter 4. The findings indicated that the current national tourism curriculum needs to be reviewed urgently and regularly. Industry role-players suggest that additional modules be added to the curriculum in order to allow students to specialise in certain sectors of the tourism industry. It was suggested that the theoretical component of the course should be expanded to two years. During this period Boland College should ensure that students obtain as much exposure as possible to the tourism industry by means of educational visits, guest speakers, networking opportunities and others. Upon completion of the theoretical component, students should embark on a formalised work-integrated learning programme with specific outcomes as established by Boland College in partnership with industry role-players. A formalised work-integrated learning programme “...provides the opportunity and the learning landscape for students to experience, first hand, professional practice activities which directly relate to the application of knowledge” (Beggs, Ross and Goodwin, 2008:32). Students should only graduate once all of the above have been completed.

1.12 Implications of the study

The implications of this study will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5. The implications of this study can be summarised as below.

1.12.1 Conceptual implications

After completing this research study my concept of the term curriculum has changed drastically. As discussed during this study, the engaged curriculum, partnership curriculum and workplace curriculum have become concepts that I would like to develop and apply at my College and specifically within the tourism department at Boland College. It is clear that a curriculum is more than just a syllabus. If I want to ensure that my students graduate from the College ready to contribute to the tourism industry with appropriate and relevant skills, knowledge and attitudes, I have to ensure that ample use is made of partnerships to understand the needs expressed by industry role-players as embodied by this study.

1.12.2 Practical implications

This study highlighted the differences between the national tourism curriculum currently offered and what the tourism industry requires from entry-level employees in terms of their knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is clear that further consideration should be given by the Department of Higher Education and Training with regards to what exactly a national tourism curriculum should entail and offer to FET tourism students.

1.12.3 Further research implications

One implication of this research is that it may be replicated in other areas to establish whether there may be similar findings. Should this be the case, the evidence can be forwarded to the Department of Higher Education and Training for serious consideration. This can be a

meaningful starting point towards the renewal of a more relevant national tourism curriculum.

1.13 Conclusion

The Education White Paper 3 (Department of Education, 1997) states that institutions are answerable for their actions and decisions. It contains concerns about the quality of higher education in South Africa. If Boland College aims to enhance the quality of education offered to students (Gosling and D'Andrea, 2001), programmes must be offered that will improve students' chances of employment. If Boland College is aware of the fact that the curriculum is outdated and still offers the curriculum to students, it does not only become a quality issue, but also an ethical one.

In Chapter 2 relevant literature will be explored in order to establish some clarity about issues relevant to this study as well as highlight important issues relevant to tourism curricula.

Chapter 2: Literature perspectives and contextualisation

A key chapter of this study is the literature review as it positions the research within a defined context. In this chapter the boundaries of the literature review are indicated and key concepts on which the study draws are clarified (Bak, 2004). The consulted literature is grouped as mainly thematic and the relevance of the literature to this study is pointed out (Athanasou, Mpofu, Gitchel and Elias, 2012). The chapter ends with an overview of the main points that have emerged from the literature review.

In the first section of this chapter I shall explore literature relevant to this study in order to define the concept of a curriculum within the context of the FET sector. The current curricula used in FET colleges are discussed as well as the type of knowledge FET colleges are dealing with through the use of such curricula. The importance of regular review of curricula will be highlighted and finally this important issue will be linked to global curriculum issues.

The second section of the chapter focuses on the context within which this study was pursued, namely the FET Sector in South Africa. Firstly, the term ‘FET sector’ will be defined and some challenges that the sector faces will be discussed. The role of the FET sector in training the unemployed in South Africa will be emphasized and legislation relevant to this study will be highlighted. The ever-changing tourism industry in relation to an observance of static curricula in FET colleges as well as the employability of FET college graduates will be discussed.

2.1 Literature perspectives

2.1.1 Research in the Further Education and Training Sector

This study focuses on the national *tourism* curriculum used within the *FET* sector. Limited literature is available covering this topic. However, countless sources are available about curriculum analysis, the importance of continuously updating curricula and combining learning theory with practical experience in the workplace. Until recently the FET sector in South Africa has been overlooked by many authors. The FET Institute at the University of the Western Cape has succeeded in putting the focus back on studying the FET sector by publishing many articles and reports with useful information. This chapter will focus on a number of relevant issues raised by authors that confirm the importance of the topic addressed by this study. It will also try to define the term ‘curriculum’ to set the stage for the rest of the study and address specific issues relevant to tourism curricula.

2.1.2 Static curricula at Further Education and Training Colleges

According to Abrahamson (1978) any curriculum should be dynamic and not static. A curriculum is a product of planning and execution, and varies with its participants, including teachers and learners alike; it changes in subtle ways, even when it is apparently unchanging; in short, it goes beyond the concept of a static listing or description of its formal components. This definition seems to fit a tourism curriculum, as the tourism industry worldwide is ever changing and dynamic (Sheldon, Fesenmaier and Tribe, 2011; Weber, 2006). Unfortunately, the current national tourism curriculum at FET colleges in South Africa is simply seen as knowledge being included or excluded in courses and seems not to have changed much in the last 15 years (Le Grange, 2006). This creates a dilemma for students who want to work in the tourism industry, as tourism professionals must possess a range of industry relevant skills and

knowledge and also stay abreast of best practices within the tourism sector (Morgan, 2003).

These requirements are needed in order to ensure that tourism professionals can meet customer expectations. It is therefore highly unacceptable that a curriculum can remain stagnant for 15 years (Padurean and Maggi, 2011; Kruss, 2004).

McGrath (2005a:147) has reminded us that “... one of the most common criticisms of public Vocational Education and Training is that it has curricula that are outdated, both in terms of learning theory and relevance to industry.” This study will therefore examine whether or not this deficiency may also apply to the current national tourism curriculum used in FET colleges. McGrath (2005a) further states that there has been growing attention to the importance of making curricula more responsive to the needs of industry and more focused on promoting the employability of graduates.

Along the same lines Oliver (1977:2) wrote that when “... a curriculum already exists; the problem is not to create it, but to keep it current and functioning”. This appears to be a current problem for all FET colleges in South Africa and the national syllabi of which they have to make use (Perold, Cloete and Papier, 2012).

2.1.3 Curriculum defined

To understand what is meant by the term ‘curriculum’ seems vital. The argument of an ‘engaged curriculum’ is proposed by Barnett and Coate (2005). They argue that the term ‘curriculum’ is normally understood in ways that are far too narrow and that it should be seen as a much wider concept. The ‘engaged curriculum’ consists of three elements, namely knowing, acting and being. Knowing refers to not only the knowledge students should obtain but also how they engage with that knowledge. Acting implies certain skills are acquired and

being involves how students develop as human beings in the process of learning (Barnett and Coate 2005). Students should learn while engaging with the self, each other, facilitators and the community at large (Oliver and Whiteman, 2008). This definition fits a tourism curriculum. Ultimately, the true success will be if students can apply theoretical knowledge taught in the tourism curriculum in the workplace (Gravett, 2004). It therefore seems justified that the tourism curriculum at institutions remains relevant to what the tourism industry requires (Billett, 2006).

In addition, Billett (2006) and Hoadley and Jansen (2009) distinguish between three types of curricula, namely the intended curriculum - in other words what is intended to occur or the curriculum as planned; the enacted curriculum, which actually happens and is also referred to as the curriculum in practice; and the experienced curriculum, which is related to what learners actually experience and learn. Billett (2006) states that the experienced curriculum is the only reasonable definition of a curriculum and "... that these bases are not reserved for what happens in workplaces or educational institutions but can be applied and have meaning in social practices wherever participation in and the remaking of these practices occur" (Billett, 2006:32). It therefore seems vital to be in close contact with the employers of graduates working in the tourism industry to better understand what students should be learning in order to equip students for life after graduation and for the workplace (Dawson, Neal and Madera, 2011).

To add to this discourse, Kelly (2004) has distinguished between other aspects of the curriculum, namely the total curriculum, which must include more than just a statement about the knowledge-content; the hidden curriculum, which refers to all the learning that takes place - whether expressly planned and intended or as a by-product of practice; the planned

curriculum, which refers to what is actually planned; and finally the received curriculum, which includes the reality of a learner's learning experiences.

As the current national tourism curriculum requires students to obtain practical experience in the tourism industry, Kelly's (2004) work seems to bring forward an important issue. Kelly (2004) states that the formal curriculum includes formal activities for which the timetable allocates specific periods of teaching time and the informal curriculum includes informal activities - for example: sports, clubs, societies and educational excursions. The informal curriculum thus plays a vital part in the preparation of students for the workplace. Networking opportunities, educational visits and work-related informal study experiences seem to be valuable to any tourism curriculum in order to provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge learnt in the classroom (Chen and Gursay, 2007).

The term 'partnership curriculum' that Kelly (2004) writes about also resonates strongly as this allows for students, industry and lecturers to comment and contribute towards a dynamic national tourism curriculum to the benefit of all parties involved. If this concept can be applied within the FET sector it may enhance the current curriculum in addressing the needs of all parties concerned (McGrath, 2005a).

2.1.4 Student learning and the curriculum

Another issue that seems of utmost importance is how students differ in terms of their learning styles. In order to engage students in learning one must understand how they learn and how this might impact on a curriculum and the teaching strategies employed (Cruce, Gonyea, Kinzie, Kuh and Shoup, 2008). In facing this challenge of engaging students in learning through an appropriate curriculum, lecturers in FET colleges are obliged to look at

the way student learning takes place. Do we provide instruction or produce learning (Barr and Tagg, 1995)? Does the curriculum allow for “... whatever approaches serve best to prompt learning of particular knowledge by particular students (Barr and Tagg, 1995:20)?”

Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh and Whitt (2005) write about the Effective Educational Practices they identified at colleges and universities in the USA. These colleges perform well in terms of student engagement and graduation rates. They recognise and accommodate different styles of student learning. Because many students prefer practical application they make use of active and collaborative pedagogies that involve activities like “...classroom-based problem solving, peer tutoring, service learning and other community-based projects, internships and involvement of educationally purposeful activities outside of class (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh and Whitt, 2005:69)”. All these activities can assist to engage students in learning and can be applied easily in a national tourism curriculum (Dhiman, 2012) but each institution will have the responsibility of creating an environment through their mission, philosophy and culture (Kuh et al., 1991) where students can truly be engaged in learning (Barnett and Coate, 2005).

Marshak (1983) stated that lecturers are familiar with two basic and distinct models of teaching/learning, namely pedagogy and andragogy. Pedagogy concerns itself with the educator setting the learning goals, the lecturing activities and student assessment, while the student’s prior experience is mostly irrelevant. Andragogy (which mainly concerns the learning of adults) refers to a situation where the student takes responsibility for his/her learning through self-direction and facilitation, rather than being lectured to in classrooms. It is clear that if lecturers wish to engage students in learning, the curriculum seems to increasingly have to allow for andragogical approaches to teaching and learning.

Tied to this are the types of knowledge produced at FET colleges. Gibbons (1994) identified two modes of knowledge: Mode 1 and Mode 2. Mode 1 knowledge tends to be rooted in disciplines, hierarchically structured and is usually transmitted from disciplinary expert (lecturer) to novice (student) and problems are usually set and solved within the academic community. Mode 2 knowledge, on the other hand, is non-hierarchical, inter- or trans-disciplinary, fast changing, contextualised and socially responsive. Problems arise in society and are solved in the context of application. SAQA (2000) refers to the international shift of the types of knowledge produced at most higher education institutions, namely from Mode 1 to Mode 2. It is clear that a static, unchanging curriculum is no longer acceptable and may mainly produce Mode 1 knowledge. Students increasingly have the need to be empowered to learn in their own specific way, in order to acquire necessary skills needed to cope in the workplace and not just be equipped with theoretical knowledge, but also with Mode 2 type knowledge that includes the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in an ever-changing workplace (Holland, 2009; Childe, 2001; Barnett, 2004; Kraak, 2000).

Lecturers may also play a key role to ensure that the curriculum "... becomes alive" in the classroom (Prinsloo and Louw, 2006:293). They emphasise: "... [L]earners should be called to awake and become continuously open to learn about themselves and about the communities in which they may eventually work. Students should rediscover themselves as learners-in-communities. Instead of the autonomous and self-directed learner, higher education institutions should nourish "...interdependency, learners-amongst-peers" (Prinsloo and Louw, 2006:293). This seems only to become a reality if curricula really engage students in their own learning by being current, relevant and alive. Due to the limited scope of this study, the role of the lecturer in curriculum innovation cannot be discussed. However, the

quality of any educational experience will depend to a large extent on the individual teacher responsible for it (Kelly, 2004). This may well be an important topic for further research.

2.1.5 Practical experience

In order to equip students for the workplace, it seems important that curricula need to incorporate practical training in the relevant industry (FET-HE Interface: Developments, Challenges and Initiatives, 2009). In a highly competitive labour market, students should leave higher education institutions empowered and ready to make a positive contribution to the economy. According to Billett (2006) there is an urgent need for workplace curriculum practices and principles to be identified, elaborated and evaluated. This need arises partially from the acknowledgement of the crucial role that workplaces play in the individuals' initial learning and the further development of vocational knowledge throughout their working lives. If learning in the workplace does not form part of the formal curriculum and is therefore not planned, managed and evaluated, it becomes a wasted opportunity as it fails to contribute to a student's learning experience (Jacoby, 1996). It therefore seems crucial to consult industry role-players to establish the needs of local tourism employers in terms of expected entry-level skills, knowledge and attitudes required by employees (McGrath, et al., 2010; Facilitating College to Work Transitions for FET college students in the Western Cape, 2012).

2.1.6 How educational and training needs for curricula are assessed

In light of what has been discussed up to now it seems clear that the term *curriculum* is complex and those curricula are ever-changing. Therefore, proper needs analyses in order to determine the gaps between existing and future skills, knowledge and abilities are extremely important (Phelan, 2008; Wang, Ayres and Huyton, 2009). Determining what the tourism

industry needs students to be able to do in the workplace is vital when assessing a curriculum used in the classroom (Learning Needs Analysis, 2013; Facilitating College to Work Transitions for FET college students in the Western Cape, 2012.). Needs analysis appears to be only one of many aspects of curriculum renewal, but possibly a first step in the process of updating any curriculum – in this case the national tourism curriculum (Collins, 2007). Inputs from industry role-players, lecturers and graduates can provide valuable insights into what possibly needs to be amended in a national curriculum such as the one in tourism (FET-HE Interface: Developments, Challenges and Initiatives. 2009).

As an example, a framework for total curriculum analysis, as developed by Posner (1992), consists of a set of five questions. A complete and detailed curriculum analysis, addressing all five sets of questions, is rarely required in practice. Depending on the needs of the institution, the focus will normally be on one set of such criteria. Posner's criteria (in broad question terms) consist of:

1. How is the curriculum documented?
2. What situation resulted in the development of the curriculum? What perspectives does the curriculum represent? To what social, economic, political, or educational problem was the curriculum attempting to respond?
3. What are the purposes and content of the curriculum? How is the curriculum organised? What types of learning objectives are included and emphasised in the curriculum? What conception of the subject matter is apparent in the curriculum?
4. How should the curriculum be implemented? What values are embedded in the curriculum, and how well are these values likely to suit the community? What can be learnt from an evaluation of the curriculum?
5. What are the curriculum's strengths and limitations?

In this study the focus will be on the fourth aspect of Posner's curriculum analysis model as it tries to establish what the tourism community in Stellenbosch requires from entry-level employees (in terms of skills, knowledge and attitudes) in the industry and how this compares to what is currently included in the existing national tourism curriculum.

2.1.7 Review of a curriculum

The Higher Education Act of 1997 assigns responsibility of quality assurance in higher education in South Africa to the Council on Higher Education (CHE). The responsibility is discharged through its permanent sub-committee, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC). The mandate of the HEQC includes quality promotion, institutional audit and programme accreditation (Council on Higher Education, 2004). The HEQC's criteria for programme accreditation can be used as a basis for an institution's self-evaluation of programmes. One step of the HEQC's programme of accreditation refers to the review of a programme. This step is almost non-existent in the college sector. Currently no reviews of curricula are required and no feedback is obtained from students, lecturers or industry role-players.

If no feedback is obtained from alumni, employers, lecturers or students, how will the parties concerned ensure that (relevant) learning is taking place? If graduates of previous years are asked to complete a survey, one would be able to establish how ex-students experience what they have learnt. This is mostly not done, but there is evidence that such information can provide valuable inputs about how curricula can be improved (McCuddy, Pinar and Gingerich, 2008; Facilitating College to Work Transitions for FET college students in the Western Cape, 2012). Reviewing the curriculum should be an ongoing process to ensure that the programme remains relevant and that students are being equipped for the workplace.

The question then arises as to how we define success in this context. Does it refer to students passing the subject or to whether they obtain employment in the tourism industry? This process seems an important part of quality assurance and McDonald and Van der Horst (2007:4) make an interesting statement about quality assurance. They state that students should be treated as ‘customers’, finding out what they want, producing ‘products’ that are fit for their purpose, and providing appropriate ‘... after-sales-service’ based on client feedback. Gosling and D’Andrea (2001) adds to the above statement by stating that an open environment should be created where students and staff feel comfortable and are able to do self-evaluation and discuss and address issues about learning and teaching. A needs analysis in curriculum review thus seems an important first step towards curriculum renewal. Feedback from lecturers, graduates and industry role-players to determine areas in the curriculum that need improvement can therefore obviously be valuable.

2.1.8 Curriculum review and development globally

Breier (2001); Barnett (2004); Bourn, McKenzie and Shiel (2006); Jordan (2008) and Barnett and Coate (2005) highlight some important issues relating to global debates on curriculum development in higher education that resemble local debates. Such issues, amongst others, include how the curriculum should reflect and accommodate a diverse student population in higher education; the importance of recognising prior learning and lifelong learning; how higher education institutions could be more responsive to the needs of the economy and communities and develop partnerships with those communities; generic skills that should be included in curricula; distance education as a method to increase access; and the importance of experiential learning to enhance learning. Some of these issues raised by the authors mentioned are discussed later as it is relevant to this study.

The next section will focus on explaining the context which is relevant to this study by referring to relevant literature. The FET sector and the national tourism curriculum will be discussed in particular.

2.2 Overview of the Further Education and Training Sector

2.2.1 Further Education and Training defined

Many terms and definitions are used in education to refer to the kind of education and training to which this study relates. In order to clarify, Gamble (2003:4) writes “Vocational Education and Training (VET); technical and vocational education and training (TVET); technical and further education (TAFE); further education (FE) and further education and training (FET) are terms used in different countries to refer to more or less the same kind of educational provision, although FET in South Africa is only partially synonymous as it also covers senior secondary schooling.” These terms will be expanded on in the next section. For the purpose of this study, the term FET College will be used to refer to the Public Further Education and Training Colleges in South Africa, specifically those that offer the Report 191 (former NATED) programmes: National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism. Boland College is one example of such an institution where the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism are offered at the Stellenbosch Campus and where the research for this study took place.

2.2.2 Challenges in South Africa’s Further Education and Training sector

Kraak and Hall (1999) identify various challenges that the FET sector in South Africa faces and although all these challenges cannot be addressed in this study, it is important to understand the context within which the study took place.

“The FET band in South Africa is unique and complex. There is a powerful sense of failure within the system with regards to the quality and relevance of FET programmes, resulting in inadequate

preparation for higher levels of learning. The FET sector has failed to link many young learners to real employment prospects in the world of work” (Kraak and Hall, 1999:20).

Many FET lecturers and managers have experienced frustrations with a lack of quality and relevance of FET programmes (Kraak, 2008).

2.2.3 Focus of Further Education and Training colleges

The Centre for Higher Education Transformation published a report on the educational needs of post-school youth. This report was presented as “...one of the most widely quoted of all the Centre for Higher Education Transformation’s (CHET’s) reports” (Cloete et al. 2009). It reportedly “...shocked the education community with the finding that almost three million youths between the ages of 18 and 24 were so-called ‘NEET’s’, a young person not in education, employment or training...” and spurred the education ministry to focus more urgently on the further education and training (FET) sector (Cloete and Butler-Adam, 2012:1). The FET Sector can provide education and training for many youths wanting to equip themselves with the necessary skills and knowledge required for an entry-level position in different sectors of the South African economy. Obviously, the task of building knowledge and skill at the intermediate level has, for a long time, been the appointed curriculum responsibility of technical colleges, but it has been neglected in recent times (Gamble, 2003). It thus seems vital, particularly for this important education and training sector that programmes are offered that are in line with what various industries require and that curricula are constantly improved to address any needs gaps that may exist.

2.2.4 Empowering Further Education and Training colleges through legislation

FET colleges have faced many uncertainties in the past few years as the mandate from the Department of Higher Education and Training for FET colleges has changed with each new

Minister of Education appointed (Department of Education, 2008). The sector is now receiving greater attention as the challenges it has faced in the past are being addressed.

“Although the technical college sector was the last to be subjected to policy reforms, the process is now in full swing. These legislative and policy instruments are intended to change the nature of technical and vocational education and training in South Africa, fundamentally. The main issues focused on this sector have centered round the low pass and throughput rates; the limited range of programmes offered; and the restrictive nature of centrally administered curricula. Further concerns are the lack of adequate workshop facilities and the need to include work experience in the curriculum” (Gamble, 2003:1).

Many of the issues identified by Gamble (2003) are of importance to this study and will be addressed later by reporting on the empirical investigation.

Due to the many challenges identified above, the Department of Higher Education and Training (2011) visualised and proposed a new and dynamic FET college sector that can meet a multitude of needs. For many educators at FET colleges the following vision statement provided for optimism about the future of FET colleges in South Africa. It also paved the way for improved linkages with industry role-players.

“The new system will need to work with different partners to deliver responsive and relevant programmes to meet the needs of individuals and the wide social and business community as a whole. The achievement of our national policy imperatives of redress and economic inclusion depend on the existence of accessible, high-quality and cost-effective learning opportunities for young people and adults” (DoE, 2011:6).

The above statements were welcomed by lecturers in the FET sector, as many of the challenges faced in FET colleges are now being addressed (Cloete and Butler-Adam, 2012). The frustration experienced by lecturers with outdated centralised curricula has been a battle for many years and the aim to deliver responsive and relevant programmes is welcomed by all involved in FET (McGrath et al., 2010).

2.2.5 The national tourism curriculum in Further Education and Training colleges

The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, stated in his Budget Vote speech of 2011, that he “...reversed the decision made three years ago to phase out the NATED Report 191 programmes (commonly known as the N-courses) as a result of strong demand from the colleges and employers.” With this statement the future direction of FET colleges was changed again as these programmes were due to be phased out during the period 2010 to 2014 (Department of Education, 2008).

The national curriculum for N-courses (NATED Report 191) used in FET colleges was implemented in 1995. According to the Department of Higher Education and Training, no analysis, review or development of the curriculum has taken place since 1998, because the programmes were going to be phased out (Koen, 2011). Now, 15 years later, the curriculum implemented in 2001⁵ is still being used at colleges. An urgent review of the curriculum for all programmes is clearly long overdue. The Council for Trade and Occupation in partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training has agreed to jointly facilitate the process of updating portions of curriculum of certain subjects within the NATED Report 191 programmes – unfortunately only one subject of the national tourism curriculum (Travel Office Procedures N4) has been selected for this process (Peters, 2013). As stated earlier, the motivation for this study stems from the above situation and hopefully this study can act as a catalyst for a curriculum renewal process of the national tourism curriculum.

⁵ The national tourism curriculum consists of 12 subjects. The syllabi for five subjects have not been updated since 1995. Three subjects were updated in 1998 and four in 2001.

2.2.6 South African Qualifications Authority, the National Qualifications Framework and Critical Cross Field Outcomes

The N-programmes have, to date, not been structured according to the guidelines set by The South African Qualifications Authority and are provisionally registered in the current format (South African Qualifications Authority, 2011):

“Technical colleges have not been required to engage significantly in curriculum and programme development, as this has traditionally been provided by the Department of Education. Curriculum reform provides a key lever to achieving transformation in FET colleges by instilling a demand for high quality, national accredited programmes aimed at holistic development of the learner. It requires that colleges overcome imbalances between theory and practice, where practical experience is necessary for the achievement of programme outcomes, and focus fundamentally on the integration of knowledge and skill, so that learners are optimally prepared for economic activity” (Gewe, 2000:143).

To date, Boland College has not, apart from involvement with the renewing of the syllabus for the one subject mentioned earlier, engaged in curriculum and programme development processes for the national tourism curriculum.

It should also be stated here that the qualifications offered at FET colleges do not incorporate SAQA’s twelve critical cross-field outcomes as their key building blocks (Kraak and Hall, 1999; Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012; Department of Education, 1997) nor the five SAQA “Life-role Application” critical outcomes as published in SAQA’s National Qualifications Framework and Curriculum Development report (2000). The Five SAQA “Life-role Application” Critical Outcomes are:

1. Capable Entrepreneurial Life-Role Performers (Creative Learners): resourceful, future-focused opportunity creators guided by an ethos of initiative and innovation.
2. Capable Career Life-Role Performers (Performance Learners): adept, productive career performers, guided by an ethos of diligence and quality.

3. Capable Personal Life-Role Performers (Inner Learners): conscientious, self-directed life managers, guided by an ethos of reflection and improvement.
4. Capable Peer Life-Role Performers (Collaborative Learners): forthright, collaborative team members, guided by an ethos of honesty and reliability.
5. Capable Citizen Life-Role Performers (Service Learners): active, responsible community contributors, guided by an ethos of caring and commitment.

The importance of including generic skills such as these life-roles as well as the CCFO's identified by SAQA in any curriculum has been highlighted by many authors (Mulder, 2012; Horng and Lu, 2006; Tesone and Ricci, 2005; Tesone and Ricci, 2006; Millar, Mao and Moreo, 2010) and will be discussed further in section 2.2.8.

Bailey (1990:68) wrote that "...some higher education establishments already foster the behavioural or transferable life skills that are essential to the future of industry both in the current and the next decade". Others, like Boland College unfortunately, have yet to recognise the need for their students to be taught anything besides purely academic knowledge. Especially in tourism, the industry needs well-rounded individuals and not just students that have theoretical knowledge (Mulder, 2012; McCuddy, Pinar and Gingerich, 2007; Kraak, 2000).

Now, more than ever, where students are faced with an unknown future (Barnett, 2004), curricula should respond to changes in the market place by being dynamic and effectively engage learners with their chosen field of study on a daily basis. A curriculum that has been unchanged for 15 years, can obviously not achieve this.

2.2.7 The tourism industry in relation to tourism training curricula and Boland College

The tourism industry is a diverse and vibrant industry that changes continuously to adapt to the needs of demanding tourists (Millar, Mao and Moreo, 2010; Morgan, 2003). External factors such as political stability, exchange rates, public health and many others have a significant impact on the tourism industry. The development of technology and its impact is of particular importance (McCuddy, Pinar and Gingerich, 2007). Tourists no longer have to stand in queues or visit travel agencies in order to book tickets, all because of the internet and e-ticketing. The constant changes impact on the knowledge and skills required by employees in the industry and employers face various challenges to ensure effective and productive staff (Millar, Mao and Moreo, 2010). Tourism education can thus not afford to be non-relevant to the needs and expectations of the tourism industry (Wang, Ayres and Huyton, 2009; Ruhanen, 2005).

It seems clear that FET colleges face the dilemma of a static, unchanged curriculum offered to learners on the one hand and, on the other, an ever changing tourism industry combined with the competitive labour market in which college graduates have to find employment.

As stated earlier, Boland College offers the National Certificates N4 – N6 (NATED Report 191 programme) in Tourism at its Stellenbosch Campus. The curriculum is pre-determined by the Department of Education and was implemented between 1995 and 2001 (depending on the subject). The tourism programme was first offered at Boland College Stellenbosch Campus in 1994. Since then the College has built up a reputation for providing well-trained, passionate individuals to work in the tourism industry. Initially students managed to find employment quickly and started their careers in the tourism industry with a willingness to

learn and excel in their professions. Over the last few years, however, students have struggled to find jobs. The Tourism Department at Boland College has a group on Facebook, 'Tourism Connect', where it remains in contact with more than 650 graduates and where they can exchange information about job opportunities (Tourism Connect, 2013). In spite of this, as I followed the comments made on Facebook, I realised that months could go by before students find suitable placements.

Various external factors contribute to a situation where many graduates struggle to find employment in a malfunctioning labour market (Kraak and Hall, 1999; McGrath et al., 2010; Brown, 2012). This raises the issue of what Boland College can do to enhance the employability of students. By offering relevant programmes that are in line with what industry requires, it can ensure that graduates are adequately equipped to start working in their chosen industry when sent into the workplace.

Students that graduate from FET colleges such as Boland College - after obtaining the NATED Report 191 N6-certificate in Tourism - start working at entry-level positions in the tourism industry. In order to ensure that students can make a positive contribution to their working environment and society, they should be able to function effectively (Wang, Ayres and Huyton, 2009). If Boland College or any other FET college offers programmes that are not aligned with the needs of industry, students will not be able to cope in the workplace.

2.2.8 Employability of graduates from the FET sector

The National Development Plan 2030 states the following: “...The FET College system is not effective. It is too small and the output quality is poor. Continuous quality improvement is needed as the system expands. The quality and relevance of courses need urgent attention. When quality starts to improve and the employability of graduates begins to increase, demand for FET services will rise automatically” (National Planning Commission, 2011:2). This statement ties in with various issues discussed in this chapter, and highlights the issue that will be discussed in this section, namely the employability of graduates from the FET sector. Powell (2012) writes that the FET sector is responsible for education and training targeted at employability. In order to understand this responsibility, it is important to unpack this concept as it is relevant to this study.

Kruss (2004:677) stated that “...[E]mployability focuses on skills formation to develop a highly educated workforce that is equipped for greater occupational mobility and flexible work patterns. This statement suits the tourism industry as it requires individuals with multiple skills and the ability to adapt to various working environments (Wang, Ayres and Huyton, 2009). Clearly, an employability focus implies changes in the national tourism curriculum (McGrath et al., 2010).

In order to ensure that students are more employable, it is important to consider what kind of graduates the tourism industry would like to hire (Horng and Lu, 2006). Graduates must be able to perform effectively in their professions, in other words be competent (Mulder, 2012). Such competence entails knowledge, skills and attitudes (Mulder, 2012; Horng and Lu, 2006; Tesone and Ricci, 2005; Tesone and Ricci, 2006; Millar, Mao and Moreo, 2010).

Or, as stated by Hawkins (2006:20) “...Knowledge can be defined as the understanding of something and the ability to use that understanding through study and experience.” Students obtain knowledge during the 18 months on campus by completing the national tourism curriculum. It is then expected that they apply that knowledge in the tourism industry while gaining practical experience (Ruhanen, 2005).

Tourism graduates require various skills to be able to function effectively in the tourism industry. “Skill at a task is the ability to carry out that particular task. Skills in the context of a company are the ability to do a particular job as specified by the employer” (Winch and Clarke, 2003:240). According to Tesone and Ricci (2006), attitude as a competency can include personality, taking pride in work, helping others, empathy, teamwork and creativity. Wang, Ayres and Huyton (2009) add enthusiasm, high emotional intelligence, etiquette and cultural differences to the list.

The tourism industry can provide valuable feedback with regards to the competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) required for graduates to be successful in the tourism industry (Kruss, 2004; Facilitating College to Work Transitions for FET college students in the Western Cape, 2012) or, as has been said aptly: “...The competency development of students is supported and enhanced by tourism education” (Horng and Lu, 2006:24). The challenge to FET colleges providing tourism education is to keep up with the fast changing tourism industry and satisfy the demands of the market place by providing productive employees equipped with suitable competencies (Sheldon, Fesenmaier and Tribe, 2011; Padurean and Maggi, 2011; Baum, 2002). FET colleges should therefore ensure that they not only make use of relevant curricula (Dhiman, 2012) but also “...demonstrate a similar set of knowledge, skills and attitudes as those with which it wishes to inculcate its learners”

(McGrath et al., 2010:50). The institution's set of knowledge, skills and attitudes is a topic for further research.

2.3 Perspectives gained from the literature overview

In this chapter I explored the concepts and context under guiding to this study. In the first section I looked into a definition for the term 'curriculum' which highlighted the fact that a static curriculum stands in contrast to an ever-changing tourism industry. As the national tourism curriculum used at FET colleges has been unchanged for 12 years, one questions whether such a curriculum can truly engage students as it cannot be relevant to what the industry requires anymore. One way to address this deficiency is to use some form of needs analysis to review the current national tourism curriculum as discussed in this chapter. In order to engage students in learning, it is vital that they obtain practical experience to apply the knowledge learnt in classrooms. As indicated by the relevant literature, the practical component - particularly in tourism education - must be well structured and executed.

In the second part of this chapter, the FET sector was explored as a context for this study. I highlighted the scope, challenges and focus of the FET sector. What became clear to me is that the Department of Higher Education and Training places an enormous responsibility on FET colleges to ensure that the unemployed youth of South Africa obtain a quality education. I discussed relevant legislation that relates to this huge responsibility.

As I have pointed out earlier in this chapter, the need for this study developed during 12 years of frustration as a lecturer at a FET college faced with using a national tourism curriculum that was implemented as far back as 1995. The problem that I experienced at my institution is that I did not know in which respects the current national tourism curriculum corresponds, or not, with what the tourism industry in Stellenbosch requires from entry-level employees in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. As the literature indicated, one reason might be that tourism students at Boland College may not be fit for employment and thus the need arose to establish what competencies the industry in Stellenbosch requires from entry-level employees.

In the next chapter, the research methodology for the empirical part of the study will be explained.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

In the previous chapter important aspects that emerged from relevant literature were highlighted. Issues regarding the context within which the study was undertaken, namely the FET College sector, were also discussed.

3.1 Introduction

As a tourism lecturer and researcher I wanted to establish in this study whether the national tourism curriculum offered at Boland College, Stellenbosch, corresponds (or does not correspond) with what important tourism industry role-players in Stellenbosch require of entry-level employees (our students) in terms of their knowledge, skills and attitudes.

In order to have achieved this aim, a suitable research design and methodology were employed. In the next paragraphs I shall explain the paradigmatic view on knowledge that I took in this study, outline my research approach as well as how the study was designed and executed.

3.2 Research Design

Ellis and Levy (2009:324) have aptly stated earlier that “...[T]he type of study one conducts is based upon three related issues: the problem driving the study, the body of knowledge, and the nature of the data available to the researcher”. Based on these three elements, as well as the aim of the study, my research was designed around the following research questions as posed (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2008):

3.2.1 Research question

In which respects are the current national tourism curriculum aligned, or not aligned, with needs of the local tourism industry in Stellenbosch?

3.2.2 Sub-questions

1. What does the current national tourism curriculum require from tourism students at FET colleges?
2. What are the employer requirements of the local tourism industry in Stellenbosch in terms of entry-level skills, knowledge and attitudes required of employees?
3. How does the current nationally taught tourism curriculum compare to the needs expressed by prominent representatives of the tourism industry in Stellenbosch?

As Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) state, the purpose of the research determines the methodology and design of the research and therefore it is important to state the objectives of this study.

3.2.3 Objectives of the study

In support of the main study aim, the objectives of this study were as follows:

- To analyse the current national tourism curriculum.
- To establish the needs of the local tourism industry in Stellenbosch in terms of entry-level skills, knowledge and attitudes required of employees.
- To compare aspects of the current national curriculum to the needs expressed by prominent representatives of the tourism industry in Stellenbosch.

3.2.4 Models of inquiry

Research refers to the process in which scientific methods are used to expand knowledge in a particular field of study (Welman and Kruger, 1999). In educational research and in higher education studies in particular, the focus is on relationships, opinions, perceptions, experiences, conditions, communities and other phenomena studied within the context of higher education (Walliman, 2006). In a wider sense, social researchers are interested in studying human and organisational behaviour, its causes and consequences. As this study is firmly based in social, educational and higher educational fields of study, such researchers hold particular beliefs about knowledge and how it can be explored and generated. They then select their research approach based on a particular stance within a research paradigm (Walliman, 2006; Anderson, 1990). This view corresponds with the aim of this study.

According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006:2) a paradigm "... is a belief about the nature of knowledge, a methodology and criteria for validity. It is the choice of paradigm that sets down the intent, motivation and expectations for the research". It is thus evident that each research question requires a particular knowledge or philosophical paradigm in order to answer the question. Positioning oneself in the 'wrong' paradigm will result in choosing the wrong research methods and thus obtaining the wrong data. Establishing the knowledge or philosophical paradigm that is best suited for the research question will ensure that the correct data is obtained and ensure research that moves beyond the technical level. Knowledge of paradigms assists a researcher to direct methods and practices (Tribe, 2001) and to understand the nature of the knowledge the researcher works with as there are different kinds of knowing (Opie, 2004; Anderson, 1990).

A number of theoretical paradigms (research paradigms) are discussed in literature. Henning (2004) indicates research aims used in educational research. Everything starts with identifying the purpose of a study – whether it is to predict, understand or change something. By determining a purpose statement, one can be pointed in the direction of a research paradigm. Table 3.1 below summarises what Henning (2004) wrote about.

Table 3.1: Research paradigms and approaches

Purpose of research	Research paradigm	Research approach
To predict or test	Positivist/post positivist	Quantitative
To understand or construct	Interpretivist/constructivist	Qualitative
To improve or change	Critical	Mixed method

(Source: Adapted from Henning, 2004)

Henning (2004) wants researchers to be able to motivate why they position their research in a particular research paradigm. In order to accomplish this, one has to understand the meaning of different research paradigms which assist in positioning research in the discipline in which one is working. The research paradigm is nothing less than the philosophical lens through which a researcher views the world (Henning, 2004). Therefore, the conclusions drawn in a study very much depend on the paradigm through which data and information are interpreted (Morgan, 1983). Once the research paradigm is established, a proper research approach, suited to the specific purpose of the research, can be established.

The two paradigms most frequently associated with educational research are:

- (a) A positivistic or scientific paradigm which seeks generalisations and “hard” quantitative, measurable data by means of employing a scientific approach and
- (b) an interpretive paradigm which aims to explore perspectives and shared meanings and to develop insights and a deeper understanding of phenomena occurring in the social

work by means of collecting predominantly qualitative data (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2008). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) state that the interpretative paradigm seeks to understand the subjective world of human experience.

Tribe (2001) has also pointed out the importance of selecting the appropriate research paradigm when evaluating a curriculum in terms of industry needs. The interpretive paradigm, which was used for positioning my study, seeks understanding and meaning (Tribe, 2001).

3.3 Research Approach

The research approach is the strategy that best fits what a researcher aims to achieve. I selected a case study approach as the study takes place at the FET college where I am currently working. A case study approach concentrates on a specific scenario and that suits this study (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2008; Lichtman, 2006). In case studies the researcher relies upon the depth and value of insights that can be revealed through a small number of highly focused interviews as a key methodical approach. “Case studies are a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (Creswell, 2007:13). This definition fits this study as I am exploring the tourism programme currently used at Boland College.

Noor (2008:1602) states that “...[A] case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence”. This definition applies to this study as current lecturers at the institution, graduates of the institution and employers in our local community of Stellenbosch were involved (Opie, 2004).

I decided to do a programmatic case study involving qualitative data as I wanted to focus on specific issues within my context as a lecturer at an FET college, as explained earlier. Ellis and Levy (2009:327) states that "...[T]he evidence used in a case study is typically qualitative in nature and focuses on developing an in-depth rather than broad, generalizable understanding".

3.4 Research Methods

Many authors have written about the different research methods. Researchers can follow a quantitative, qualitative or mixed method approach. As stated by Struwig and Stead (2001:15): "Quantitative research is a form of conclusive research involving large representative samples and fairly structured data collection procedures. Qualitative research can be viewed as interdisciplinary, multi-paradigmatic, and multi-method." The aim is to understand our social world better and hopefully use the research to bring about social change (Henning, 2004). Mixing quantitative and qualitative research methods should be viewed as something that can be adopted to fit some research questions (Bryman, 2006), but not applicable to this study.

Struwig and Stead (2001) provide the following guidelines for selecting a research method:

Table 3.2: Quantitative and qualitative research guidelines

This approach if:	Quantitative	Qualitative
Believe that:	There is an objective reality that can be measured.	There are multiple constructed realities.
Audience is:	Familiar with and supportive of quantitative studies.	Familiar with and supportive of qualitative studies.
Research question is:	Confirmatory, predictive	Exploratory, interpretive
Available literature is:	Relatively large	Limited or missing
Research focus:	Covers a lot of breadth	Involves in-depth study
Time available is:	Relatively short	Relatively long
Ability/desire to work with people is:	Medium to low	High
Desire for structure is:	High	Low
Have skills in the areas of:	Statistics and deductive reasoning	Attention to detail and inductive reasoning.
Writing skills are strong in area of:	Technical, scientific writing	Literary, narrative writing

(Source: Struwig and Stead, 2001:20)

As stated earlier, this study made use of qualitative data as it involved “...analysing and interpreting texts and interviews in order to discover meaningful patterns descriptive of a particular phenomenon” (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003:1). The in-depth interviews that were conducted with respondents (which will be discussed later in this chapter) were analysed and interpreted in order to establish the findings of this study (Lichtman, 2006).

As qualitative data can be used effectively to identify a pattern or trends in relation to a specific phenomenon, it seemed useful to have employed such data to achieve the aim of this study (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2008). Lichtman (2006) highlights the fact that the interpretations from qualitative data are informed and enhanced by the researcher’s experience and background if relevant to the particular case (Lichtman, 2006). I agree with this statement, as I have been working at Boland College for 12 years in tourism education and training.

3.4.1 Sampling

Participants in research can be described as those individuals whose involvement can range from providing data to initiating and designing the study (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2008). The participants identified for this study were as follows:

1. Employers from the tourism industry in Stellenbosch that have employed graduates from Boland College in the past.
2. Graduates from Boland College who have completed the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism.
3. Lecturers from Boland College in Stellenbosch that currently lecture the subjects that form part of the national tourism curriculum.

These participants can also be referred to as the accessible population or as stated by Fraenkel and Wallen (2008:1): “The population from which the researcher can realistically select subjects for a sample.” The sample size was also determined by the type of establishments mostly used for our students to obtain practical experience as well as convenience sampling through using employers our student’s regular work at.

The industry participants for this study were selected in order to be representative of a larger group of tourism employers in Stellenbosch (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2008). I used purposive sampling (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2008) to select fifteen employers from the local tourism industry that represented various sectors of the tourism industry, namely wine farms, accommodation establishments, a museum, information centre, travel agents and a tour operator. I wanted to ensure that not only one sector of the tourism industry was represented in this study. I also wanted to ensure that the sectors that our students currently are employed in were represented in this study. Boland College has an ongoing relationship with these establishments as many students have worked at them over the years. It was important to

obtain the data from industry role-players that have employed students from Boland College in the past and not merely owners of any tourism establishment.

Eight graduates of Boland College were selected to participate as respondents in this study. The criteria used included selecting students that have completed the national tourism curriculum applicable to this study and students that are currently employed in tourism in one of the sectors mentioned in the previous paragraph. It was important to obtain the data from these particular graduates as they are currently working in the tourism industry in Stellenbosch and had been able to provide valuable data relevant to this study.

The tourism department at Boland College Stellenbosch Campus consists of six full time lecturers. They have all been working at Boland College teaching the national tourism curriculum relevant to this study for between 5 and 12 years. They were all invited to participate in this study. Two of the lecturers have worked in the tourism industry previously as travel agents, another one as a tour operator and a further one as an event co-coordinator. The other two worked as Marketing Managers in other industries. The additional interview data obtained from the six lecturers could explain unexpected results obtained after completion of the industry interviews and better explain the range and depth of attitudes, beliefs and experiences held by industry role-players (Seal, Bogart and Ehrhardt, 1998). In the next section I shall indicate how I generated and captured the data for this study.

3.4.2 Data collection

To generate participant data I made use of semi-structured, face-to-face interviews. Semi-structured interviews can be defined as interviews "...constructed around a core of standard questions; however, the interviewer may expand on any question in order to explore a given

response in greater depth” (Mitchell and Jolley, 2001:9). I prepared an interview guide for use in the interviews consisting of three open-ended questions (See Addendum A). Open-ended questions aim to solicit broad information from respondents (Richardson, 2013), but each question was accompanied by prompts that were used when respondents provided insufficient information or needed examples to continue the interview (Scott and Usher, 1999).

According to Burton, Brundrett and Jones (2008) face-to-face interviews allow the researcher to obtain in-depth data that are interactive. I was able to use the prompt questions to obtain additional information from respondents and although interviews were time consuming to conduct, transcribe and collate, it was worthwhile in relation to the type of data I obtained.

The following procedure applied regarding the interviews: The identified respondents were contacted via telephone and e-mail to request a suitable date, time and place in order to conduct the interview. During each interview a relaxed atmosphere was created as I knew all the respondents from previous encounters. Most interviews took place in a lounge at the various establishments in the case of employers or graduates and in an empty classroom in the case of lecturers. The purpose of the interview was explained again to each participant as well as the manner in which the responses would be captured – in this case digital audio recording (Clough and Nutbrown, 2007). This ensured that the evidence was available and could be directly transcribed. In some cases I had to interrupt interviewees, although in a polite manner, to keep them from losing focus in the interview or drifting into pet topics (Tuckman, 1994).

Campbell, McNamara and Gilroy (2004:99) warn that "... it would appear that many individuals feel pressure to want to give answers to interview questions that please the interviewer and many try to guess the answer favoured by the person asking the question". This made me realise that I had to make it clear to respondents, including graduates at the beginning of the interview that they could give their opinion freely as this would add to the authenticity of the study.

I decided to transcribe the data myself in order to ensure verbatim records. After each interview, I used the digital audio recording to transcribe the interview (See Addendum B). Each respondent was allocated a code in order to distinguish between them but not to be able to individually identify them. The coding was done as follows:

1. Employers were coded with an E and a number from 1 to 8 for example, E1.
2. Lecturers were coded with a L and a number from 1 to 6 for example, L1.
3. Graduates were coded with a G and a number from 1 to 8 for example, G1.

Each transcribed interview was saved on my personal laptop and on a secure flash disk under the applicable code.

3.3.1 Data analysis

3.4.3.1 Data analysis of interviews

After transcribing the data I started analysing it in order to identify emerging patterns that could be linked to relevant literature. This was a complex process that took a significant amount of time. According to Burton, Brundrett and Jones (2008) data analysis involves a continuous dialogue between the data themselves, pre-determined and emergent codes, relevant practical and theoretical perspectives and the researcher's own professional practice knowledge. I will expand on this statement in this section.

The process of data analysis, as explained by Lichtman (2006) involves generating codes, organising these codes into categories or topics and relating these categories to concepts. Denscombe (2007) expanded on this by stating that the process involves coding the data, categorising the codes, identifying themes and relationships and finally developing concepts or generalised statements.

The goal of analysing the transcribed interviews was to arrive at common themes (Lichtman, 2006) by reading and thinking about the text (Scott and Usher, 1999). It is also explained as shorthand to identify the data and allocate such data to a system of categories and sub-categories (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2008; Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). According to Campbell, McNamara and Gilroy (2004:131) “...this process necessitates the researcher being simultaneously systematic and creative in her examination of the data. The process involves breaking data up into fragments, analysing their meaning and allocating codes to the concepts that are identified.” In order to achieve this, I drew up the spreadsheet included as Addendum C. I listed the respondents that participated in the study according to:

1. Firstly, the codes allocated to them when the interviews were transcribed and
2. Secondly, according to the sector they represent or in the case of lecturers, where they worked while employed in the tourism industry in the past.

I then started grouping concepts and responses that share common characteristics together by listing them and indicating which other respondents agreed or disagreed with the comment made. For example, when the first respondent indicated that students cannot spell, I added it on the top row of the spreadsheet. I then indicated next to each respondent if they indicated the same aspect, and what their opinion was about the aspect (see Addendum C). The aim of

this process was to group the concepts together in order to create categories and reduce the number of separate items I had to think about (Campbell, McNamara and Gilroy, 2004).

I decided to group the data in the following three categories: knowledge, skills and attitudes. These categories were identified in similar previous studies (Tesone and Ricci, 2005; Tesone and Ricci, 2006; Millar, Mao and Moreo, 2010; Enz, Renaghan and Gellar, 1993; Okeiyi, Finley and Postel, 1994; Zehrer and Mossenlechner, 2009; Cecil, 2012) and the majority of issues raised by respondents in this study seemed to fit these three categories. The specific responses made by respondents could then be classified under the categories identified in order to discuss them in the next chapter.

3.4.3.2 Analysis of the national tourism curriculum

The national tourism curriculum was summarised and is attached as Addendum D. As indicated previously, the national tourism curriculum consists of 12 subjects. The syllabus of each subject was analysed and the learning objectives of each subject listed. The associated assessment criteria were summarised and included. Due to the fact that the national tourism curriculum consists of 12 subjects, I had to make use of summaries of each subject otherwise the data would have been unmanageable. The summary was done in order to compare the data obtained from the interviews to the details of the national tourism curriculum. This is discussed in the next chapter.

3.5 Validating the study

Guba (1981) proposes four criteria that researchers using non-numeric data should pursue when doing research: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Other criteria can also be used as basis for judging the quality of a study. According to Fraenkel

and Wallen (2008:2) qualitative data “...encompasses instrument reliability and validity, as well as internal validity”. Bassie (1999:75) writes that the “...concepts of reliability and validity are vital concepts in surveys and experiments – but not in case study research.” He further states that an alternative to reliability and validity is the concept of trustworthiness which will be discussed during this section. Guba and Lincoln (1981) states that qualitative data are credible when others can recognise experiences after only reading about them. Opie (2004:71) states that “...credibility is a useful indicator of goodness in case study research” and will be discussed in the next section.

3.5.1 Validity and Credibility

In the use of qualitative methods the term credibility is used to refer to the quantitative concept of validity (Creswell, 2007). Credibility in qualitative research may be established through triangulation. In order to ensure triangulation for this study, employers, lecturers and graduates were selected as participants. Triangulation involves obtaining data from different sources in order to enhance the validity of the outcomes (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2008).

Validity also refers to matters of accuracy, the appropriateness of the data and whether it measures what it claims to measure (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005; Mason, 2002). A researcher must ensure that the data obtained in a study is grounded extensively in fieldwork and empirical data as the validity of a study “...depends on the relationship of your conclusions to reality” (Maxwell, 2005:105). Throughout this study, and as indicated in the next chapter, relevant literature was used to ground the findings of this study. Also, the fieldwork in this study addressed a real-life problem and concern that has been agreed upon as a material problem in need of being solved.

Tuckman (1994) and Ellis and Levy (2009) distinguish between internal and external validity. Internal validity is when the “...outcome of the study is a function of the program or approach being tested rather than the result of other causes not systematically dealt with in the study” (Tuckman, 1994:6). Internal validity can be examined by using face validity and is “...based on appearance” and whether the instrument or process seems to pass the test for reasonableness (Ellis and Levy, 2009:334). In my opinion the process followed in this study was reasonable, the research question valid and the results obtained true for those participating in the study (Anderson, 1990).

If external validity is achieved the “...results obtained would apply in the real world to other similar programs and approaches” (Tuckman, 1994:6). It is not possible to claim that this study will achieve external validity in terms of the results as the results in other settings might be different. It was therefore pointed out in the final chapter of this thesis that the study be duplicated in other areas where the national tourism curriculum is offered. External validity was achieved in terms of the process followed during the research as will be discussed in section 3.6.

External validity was also enhanced in this study as respondents positively participated. The findings of this study are also similar to the results of a study⁶ that was performed by the Further Education and Training Institute (Facilitating College to Work Transitions for FET college students in the Western Cape, 2012).

⁶ The project was commissioned by the DG Murray Trust in collaboration with the Western Cape Education Department Further Education and Training directorate in January 2012. Phase 1 of the project included research to establish what industry requires from entry-level employees. Tourism was one of four sectors investigated.

3.5.2 Reliability

The research process must be open for audit and evaluation by peers. Reliability of a study might be problematic to establish as it refers to a degree of consistency in a study (Merriam, 1991). When only one researcher is involved, such as is the case here, how will one establish whether the person was consistent in how the process was conducted? I am of the opinion that my actions were reliable as the data obtained within this study indicate similarities across respondents (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2008); this is also referred to as internal consistency (Ellis and Levy, 2009). Reliability also simply means to answer the question about whether the “...researcher’s efforts would yield similar results under similar circumstances” (Murray, Bagby and Sulak, 2010:37). A similar study may yield similar results as I was consistent in how I conducted the research process. Ultimately this study will also be evaluated by peers as I will submit the findings to the Department of Higher Education and Training.

3.5.3 Transferability and generalisability

Transferability ties in with external validity as discussed earlier. It is defined by Fraenkel and Wallen (2008:9) as “...[T]he degree to which an individual can expect the results of a particular study to apply in a new situation or with new people.” As stated earlier, it will not be fair to claim that the results of this study may apply in a different institutional or regional context, but it remains as a possibility for further research (Shenton, 2004). Any claim to generalisability for this study would be problematic as this research was limited to one town in one region and to one institution (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003; Chenail, 2010).

3.5.4 Trustworthiness

Opie (2004) writes about the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) that stated that trustworthiness involves credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Savin-

Baden and Major (2010) also list these four aspects as criteria for trustworthiness. The first two aspects were discussed previously in this section. I will now only briefly refer to the last two, dependability and conformability.

Dependability is the notion that “...research can be trusted over time” (Savin-Baden and Major (2010:174) and repeated by future researchers (Shenton, 2004). In this case this criterion seems likely to have been met as the results of this project can potentially be used for replanning purposes based on real needs as expressed by various role players. Dependability will be further enhanced if this study could be replicated at other FET colleges.

Conformability refers to the “...idea that the researcher has remained neutral in data analysis and interpretation” Savin-Baden and Major (2010:174). Throughout this research study I consciously tried to distance myself from the data (Shenton, 2004) and acted as a researcher and not as a lecturer or employee from Boland College or a programme head that had to defend anything. The skill of ‘bracketing’ oneself is a difficult one which I have consciously promoted throughout my research.

3.6 Ethical considerations

This section deals with ethical issues inherent in the research setting. As a student enrolled at the University of Stellenbosch I was subjected to institutional ethical clearance processes before starting any research. This process included applying for ethical clearance with the Departmental Ethics Screening Committee by completing the relevant documentation and obtaining institutional consent by obtaining a letter from the Campus Manager at Boland College, Stellenbosch Campus (see Addendum E) which stated that she was aware and approved of the study.

As indicated on the application, the study involved minimal risk and all protocol as required by the University of Stellenbosch was followed. I could only continue with the study once the approval notice was received from the ethics committee (see Addendum F).

Every respondent that participated in the study was asked to sign a 'Consent to Participate in Research' document (see Addendum G). I also indicated to participants that they did have the right not to participate and would remain anonymous as I was not to reveal their identity (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). Informed consent involves informing participants of the nature and purpose of the research, its risks and benefits, and participants must agree to participate in the study without being coerced (Anderson, 1990).

The data obtained in the interviews were kept secure and confidential and will only be destroyed upon completion of the study (Tuckman, 1994). I also assured participants throughout that their responses would be kept confidential and ultimately securely destroyed. I further assured respondents that their anonymity would be maintained where their responses might be reported in any published form (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2008).

3.7 Methodological limitations

Limitations of a study refer to "... potential weaknesses or problems with the study identified by the researcher" (Creswell, 2005:198). One major limitation of my study was that it could not be generalised to other tourism contexts. Earlier, Millar, Mao and Moreo (2010) completed a similar exploratory study involving qualitative data. The sample size in their study was small, similar to my study. As a result, in both studies "... generalisation to the rest of the Hospitality and Tourism Education population is difficult. In addition, content analysis

may be very subjective; therefore results of this study may be biased” (Millar, Mao and Moreo, 2010:48). As my study also includes document analysis and comparative elements to the national FET Tourism curriculum, one could say that the triangulation as well as the comparative nature of the study made it a useful study. In order to be generalisable any researcher should be able to have representation from all FET colleges offering Tourism education and training. This would potentially become a major study which is outside of the scope of what had been aimed at in this study.

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter the research design and methodology were outlined and justified. Data obtained from interviews with tourism industry role-players, lecturers and graduates as well as an analysis of the national tourism curriculum rendered a spectrum of useful information which will be reported in the next chapter. Finally, a comparison between the results of the interviews and the national tourism curriculum will be reported on.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter key concepts related to this study were explored using relevant literature. It was made clear that any curriculum, let alone a tourism curriculum, cannot afford to stay unchanged for 15 years as the world and its industries are constantly changing. It was pointed out that an urgent review of the current national tourism curriculum in FET colleges may be required.

The reader was also informed of the context within which this study was conducted. Some of the challenges the FET sector faces were highlighted. Although the Department of Higher Education and Training has placed the spotlight firmly on the FET sector through many policy changes that have highlighted the importance of the sector, tourism lecturers are frustrated with the slow pace of change – one of which is the national tourism curriculum implemented as far back as between 1995 and 2001.

In this chapter, the results of interviews with industry representatives, lecturers and graduates will be reported and discussed.

4.2 Results of interviews

As explained in Chapter 3, interviews were conducted with 15 role-players from the tourism industry in Stellenbosch, 8 graduates from Boland College and 6 lecturers working in the tourism department at Boland College. The data generated by the interviews were then analysed and coded (see Addendum C). Data was then grouped into the following three categories: (a) knowledge, (b) skills and (c) attitudes - as it became clear that the majority of

issues raised by respondents would fit into these three categories. Wang, Ayres and Huyton (2009:63) confirms the importance of such categories by stating that “...[T]ourism education has the aim to provide job ready graduates who are able to apply their skills and knowledge to tourism management practice” (Wang, Ayres and Huyton, 2009:63).

The key issues identified by respondents were then listed under each category (see Table 4.1). The content of the national tourism curriculum was then summarized (see Addendum D), outlining the subjects per semester, with their respective learning objectives and assessment criteria. The final step was to compare interview results with the content of the national tourism curriculum. The findings of this comparison follow in this chapter.

Table 4.1: Categories as identified according to specific issues identified

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
Good vocabulary and ability to write and spell accurately.	Good communication skills and excellent service skills.	Friendly, outgoing disposition is more suitable for a position in the industry.
Additional knowledge required for specific sectors.	General life skills required and exposure to travel important.	Punctuality required.
Knowledge required of the practical tourism environment.	Proper telephone etiquette is required.	Ability to think for oneself, have common sense, and being pro-active vital.
Ability to apply knowledge in working environment vital.	Acting and dressing in a suitable and professional manner not negotiable.	Good work ethics is important.
Knowledge required of specific establishments.	Excellent computer skills required as well as sector specific computer software skills training required.	Good self-confidence is advantageous.

Table 4.1 indicates the key issues as identified by respondents during the interviews. The issues listed under the ‘knowledge’ column relate to the knowledge required for the tourism

industry as a whole as well as specific sectors of the industry. How the knowledge is applied in the workplace in general and at specific institutions forms part of the identified issues. The 'skills' column highlights the generic skills identified by respondents that are required from entry-level employees in the tourism industry. The 'attitudes' column lists the ideal type of personality suited to the tourism industry as well as the importance of good work ethics. Respondents identified issues such as the importance of being pro-active and good self-confidence as requirements for a person working in the tourism industry.

4.3 Results of curriculum review

A summary of the content of the national tourism curriculum (see Addendum D), outlining the four subjects per semester with their learning objectives and assessment criteria provided a basis for analysis. The learning outcomes were summarized by only including the topics covered under each of the learning outcomes. The assessment criteria were listed per subject. An example of a full syllabus for one subject, namely Hotel Reception N6 is included as Addendum H.

The required semester subjects that form part of the national tourism curriculum are listed in Table 4.2 on the next page. This programme is offered at Boland College by means of full-time classes over a period of 18 months.

Table 4.2: Subjects included in the national tourism curriculum

National Certificate N4	National Certificate N5	National Certificate N6
Tourist Destinations N4	Tourist Destinations N5	Tourist Destinations N6
Travel Services N4	Travel Services N5	Travel Services N6
Travel Office Procedures N4	Travel Office Procedures N5	Travel Office Procedures N6
Tourism Communication N4	Tourism Communication N5	Hotel Reception N6

In each semester of six months, students complete the four subjects listed in Table 4.2. Students must pass at least three out of the four subjects in order to proceed to the next level. The pass rate for the subjects is 50% except for Travel Services N4 and N5 (60%) and Travel Services N6 (70%).

The national tourism curriculum also states the following: “Arrangements must be made with local hotels/guest houses/country inns/game lodges for students to follow a co-operative education programme. A work-based experiential training period of at least three months during the 18/24 months of the tourism instructional programme is highly recommended by the Department of Higher Education and Training. The nature of the observation and work during the experiential period depends on the knowledge and skills of the student, the type of accommodation enterprise in the local area and the relationship between the college and such enterprises” (Republic of South Africa, 1998:5).

Once candidates obtain the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism issued by the The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) they can further their education by completing a further 18 month practical training component in a tourism-related business. Upon completion, graduates can submit their N4 – N6 certificates as well as evidence (in the form of a letter from the company they worked at) to the DHET. The DHET then evaluates the experience obtained against the content of the N6 subject-syllabi before awarding a

Diploma in Tourism to candidates. This proves to be a very cumbersome process and in 2012 only five students were awarded the National Diploma in Tourism (Wanza, 2013).

4.4 Findings – a comparison between interview results and the national tourism curriculum

In this section, each category (knowledge, skills and attitudes) is discussed separately (see 4.4.1; 4.4.2 and 4.4.3). For each category the specific aspects as identified in the previous section in Table 4.1 are listed as points under each category. These points, together with responses from respondents pertaining to the issue are listed in the first column of the tables that follow.

In the second column of each table the topics that are covered in the national tourism curriculum are related to issues identified by respondents and are then listed. Where no data are included under the ‘comparison with curriculum’ column, such requirements are not included in the current national tourism curriculum. Only the topics that are covered and relevant to each section are listed.

Each table is followed by a discussion of the findings. Each discussion includes relevant examples of responses provided by respondents. The responses listed are representative of what respondents identified as important during the interviews. After each comment, the respondent is indicated according to the following codes:

E = Employer

G = Graduate

L = Lecturer

A discussion of the findings according to the procedure as explained above, follows next.

4.4.1 Knowledge

The knowledge components or aspects that emerged from interviews included using good vocabulary and correct spelling in written communication, sector specific knowledge, practice-based knowledge and knowledge application at various types of establishments.

4.4.1.1 Good vocabulary and ability to write and spell accurately

As can be seen from Table 4.3, several respondents referred to the fact that students struggle with written communication and spelling. Teaching students vocabulary is currently not included in the curriculum. The focus is on preparing students for employment. Therefore topics included in the national tourism curriculum with regards to written communication include the correct style of writing, writing letters and memos, answering enquiries and complaints, designing brochures, writing job application letters and compiling itineraries and reports.

Table 4.3: Data summary on written communication

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
<p>-Alarming how many students struggle with written communication and have limited vocabulary.</p> <p>-Add Communication as subject in N6 to try to improve this.</p>	<p>Tourism Communication N4 deals with written communication (correct style, letter writing, seminars, and memos) department, proper and correct behaviour.</p> <p>Tourism Communication N5 deals with written communication in terms of writing and answering enquiries, complaints, designing brochures, writing job application letters, reports, and itineraries.</p>

In order to gain admission to the National Certificate in Tourism N4 at Boland College it is advisable that applicants obtain at least 50% average in the Senior Certificate examination. At this level of education one assumes a certain level of competence has been reached by students in terms of basic reading and writing. It is alarming that some students who have achieved this average percentage in Grade 12 have a limited vocabulary and struggle with written communication. From the verbatim responses below it is clear that employers and lecturers both share this concern.

“Die taalvaardigheid is ‘n probleem in terme van e-posse stuur – ons kontroleer alles. Niks wat ‘n student ooit tik sal ons ooit net stuur nie – hulle skryf in sms taal.” (E4) *(Language skills are a problem in terms of the sending of e-mails – we check everything. We will never just send anything that a student types - they write in sms language.)*

“The Mxit language is a problem. Proper full sentences, full stops, nouns, etc. Students cannot talk to or write to guests in that manner – and they need to understand the difference.” (E9)

“Daar is maar baie van die outjies wat se taalgebruik in N6 skokkend sleg is: veral as mens kyk na hoe hulle spel en skryf. En dan dink jy nou moet hulle ‘n e-pos tik aan ‘n kliënt met ‘n itinerary op – hoe gaan die spelling lyk.” (L2) *(There are many of the students whose language usage in N6 is shockingly bad, especially when you look at how they spell and write. And then they have to type an e-mail to a client with an itinerary on – what will the spelling look like?)*

In order to try and address this issue a suggestion was made to extend the subject Tourism Communication to N6 level. Adding another subject to the current workload of the programme is not advisable as some students already struggle to pass and keep up with the pace. A suggestion was made to expand the programme to two years and might be a possible solution to investigate.

“Ons kan, indien ons meer tyd gehad het, die Kommunikasie deurma tot op N6 vlak en die kommunikasie kan baie meer gesproke verpligtinge inbou. As jy nie meer tyd gaan hê daarvoor waar die ou verplig gaan word om gesprekke te voer nie; ons omgewing laat dit nie altyd toe nie. Die omgewing maak dit maklik vir die ou wat Afrikaans is om Afrikaans te praat alhoewel die bedryf Engels is.” (L4) *(We can, if we had more time, take Communication to N6 level and include more speaking components. If you have more time to force students to partake in conversations; our*

environment does not always allow that. The environment makes it easy for the person who is Afrikaans to speak Afrikaans.)

4.4.1.2 Additional knowledge required for specific sectors

It became clear from the responses from respondents that students require additional knowledge for specific sectors in the tourism industry. Although students have good knowledge about tourist destinations, Table 4.4 indicates the sector specific knowledge required for the tourism industry as it is not included in the national tourism curriculum.

Table 4.4: Data summary on additional knowledge required for specific sectors

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students have good knowledge about Tourist Destinations but it is taught in too much detail. -Knowledge about Stellenbosch is vital. -Wine farms prefer students who have completed the introductory Cape Wine Academy course. -Travel agents require a GDS (Galileo) qualification. -Tour operators require a Tour Guiding qualification and PDP. -Marketing and Management training will be advantageous for students. -Training about basics in finance: payment options, credit card payments and terms and conditions on policies should be included. -Students must be able to do costing, budgets and cash-up. 	<p>In Tourist Destinations N4 – N6: Map work; South Africa as a tourist destination; Major attractions and tourist information of the provinces of South Africa (including Stellenbosch); Lesotho and Swaziland as tourist destinations. The countries listed below are studied as tourist destinations with all relevant tourist information learned: African countries, Indian Ocean Islands, United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland; Western Europe, Southern Europe, Middle East and the United States of America.</p> <p>In Travel Office Procedures N4: Marketing concepts, consumer behaviour, marketing mix and sales techniques (sales, business travel, client profile and incentive travel are dealt with).</p> <p>In Travel Office Procedures N5: Financial record-keeping: cash receipts and payments journal, debtors and creditors journal, petty cash journal, balancing systems, source documents, posting to the ledger, trial balance, income statement, balance sheet and bank reconciliation are dealt with.</p> <p>In Travel Services N6: the following topics are dealt with: tour planning and budgeting, fares and costing.</p>

The data obtained for this section was grouped according to main themes identified by respondents and as listed in the table above. These items are numbered (i) – (vii).

(i) Knowledge about destinations

Respondents referred to the amount of information covered in the subject Tourist Destinations. Although students obtain a significant amount of knowledge about the tourist destinations of the world, it is questionable whether or not it is required and how much of it is remembered by students. With technology at one's finger tips and the access to the internet unlimited in most cases, the subject could perhaps have a different focus. The focus of the subject can be shifted to the workplace. If a student works (for example) as a travel agent, information officer or tour operator – the typical types of information requested by guests and how to find the information should rather be included in the subject. Perhaps the subject can include more time in a computer lab where students use the online tools available – many respondents referred to the use of Trip Advisor, Hostel Bookers, etc.

“Hulle bestemmingskennis is goed maar met die internet is dit nie nodig dat hulle alles weet nie want hulle kan bloot Google.” (E3) *(Their knowledge of destinations is good, but with the internet is not necessary that they know everything because they can just Google.)*

“Ek dink hulle is miskien te veel gefokus op die “nitty gritty” goed soos Bestemmings – te veel detail. In plaas daarvan dat hulle ‘n weier veld dek met minder gefokusde goed. Al die detail wat hulle moet weet en opsoek en moet ken – en dit is nie noodwendig nodig nie. As hulle by ‘n plek gaan werk gaan hulle die nodige produk kennis baie vinnig opdoen. Dit is belangrik dat hulle wel die “basics” weet.” (L3) *(I think there is too much focus on the nitty gritty stuff like Destinations – too much detail. They can rather cover a wider field of less focused topics. All the detail they must look up and must know – it is not necessarily needed. If they start working at an establishment they will get to know the product quickly. It is necessary that they know the basics.)*

“Ek gebruik my Bestemmings-kennis baie, want gaste vra altyd oor Suid-Afrika en dan is dit goed om te weet. Ek kan dan my kennis gebruik.” (G6) *(I use my knowledge of Destinations often because guests always ask about South Africa and then it is good to know. I can then use my knowledge.)*

As this study was conducted in Stellenbosch, respondents also referred to knowledge students have about their local town, Stellenbosch. Employers and graduates mentioned the importance of having knowledge about Stellenbosch as a tourist destination and while some students have the necessary knowledge, others need additional training. Stellenbosch as a tourist destination is included in the curriculum and students also partake in an educational visit to the most important tourist attractions in Stellenbosch during their studies.

“Vir ons op Stellenbosch is dit nodig dat die studente die plaaslike attraksies ken – byvoorbeeld om vir ‘n toeris aanwysings te gee. En ook Kaapstad; hulle reis sonder ‘n plan en studente moet kan help.” (E8) *(For us in Stellenbosch it is necessary that students know the local attractions – for example to be able to give a tourist directions. Also for Cape Town; tourists travel without a plan and students must be able to help.)*

(ii) Knowledge about wine culture

Respondents representing wine farms indicated that it is advisable for students to complete an introductory course about wine culture similar to what the Cape Wine Academy offers as it equips them to work in a wine tasting venue and they can start working immediately. In the past, Boland College included this course in their curriculum. Currently the Department of Higher Education and Training only provides funding for the four core Tourism N4 – N6 subjects (see Table 4.2) and Boland College cannot add any additional courses to the programme. The course is offered as an additional programme, at extra cost to the student, but very few students can afford to pay for it themselves. Students do partake in an educational visit to a wine farm.

“Hulle het nie baie kennis van wyn nie. Dit sal beslis tot hulle voordeel wees indien hulle die KWA⁷ kursus doen sodat hulle darem so bietjie van ‘n voorsprong op ander studente het. Dit sal goed wees indien hulle meer blootstelling aan die wynbedryf kan kry. Julle kan byvoorbeeld die studente bring vir ‘n sjokolade en wynproe en ons sal hulle ook op ‘n keldertoer kan neem. En hulle moet probeer ondervinding kry – enige werk in die wynbedryf – al is hulle die “barman” by ‘n “pub” sal dit kan help. Enige blootstelling in die bedryf is goed. Ook as hulle wynplase self besoek sal dit goed wees.” (E12) *(They do not have a lot of knowledge about wine. It will definitely be to their advantage if they*

⁷ Kaapse Wyn-akademie

complete the CWA⁸ course so that they have an advantage over other students. It will be good if they have more exposure to the wine industry. You can bring them for a chocolate and wine tasting and we can take them on a cellar tour. And they must try to get some experience; any work in the wine industry – even if they are a barman in a pub it will help. Any exposure to the industry is good. Also, if they visit wine farms themselves it will be good.)

(iii) GDS Training

Respondents representing the travel sector – specifically travel agents, indicated that students must complete GDS training in order to find employment in the industry. A global distribution system (GDS) links travel agents with tourism suppliers all over the world via computer software programmes. It allows travel agents to make bookings for airlines, accommodation, transport etc. all over the world. Although lecturers refer to the use of GDS (especially in the subjects Travel Services N4 and N5 where students are taught manual ticketing), the course itself is too expensive to include in a tourism programme. Various GDS programmes exist – the most well-known in South Africa are Galileo and Amadeus. The current (2013) cost to complete the training is roughly R4500 depending on the course and provider. Currently CATHSSETA⁹ is investigating the possibility of obtaining a licence for Colleges to offer Galileo training at the institutions and Boland College has already sent one lecturer on Galileo training. Although some employers are willing to send students on Galileo training if they have not completed it, employers have to pay for the training and lose someone out of the office for two weeks.

“Die enigste probleem is die GDS (Galileo) wat ons gebruik. Dit is maar die “main” ding waarop hulle werk. So die outjies wat reisagente wil word moet totaal en al bewus gemaak word daarvan, dat as jy ‘n reisagent wil word, dan moet jy ‘n Galileo of Amadeus kwalifikasie hê. Sonder dit is jy nie ‘n reisagent nie. Ons stuur hulle wel vir die opleiding maar ons verkies dat hulle wel dit reeds gedoen het en bietjie ondervinding het. Ons verloor basies iemand vir twee weke as ons hulle op die kursus stuur – en as ons iemand aanstel het ons eintlik die persoon dadelik nodig. Hulle moet begin ondervinding

⁸ Cape Wine Academy

⁹ The Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) is one of the 21 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) that have been re-established by the Minister for Higher Education and Training for the period 2011 – 2016.

opdoen en begin besprekings maak.” (E2) *(The only problem is the GDS (Galileo) that we use. That is the main thing they work on. So the guys that want to become travel agents must be made aware of the fact that if you want to be a travel agent you must have a Galileo or Amadeus qualification. Without it you are not a travel agent. We do send them for training but prefer if they have done it and have some experience. We basically lose someone for two weeks if we send them on the course – and if we appoint someone we need that person immediately. They must start gaining experience and must start making bookings.)*

One of the lecturers, who was a travel agent for many years, commented:

“Enige GDS opleiding – almal is maar min of meer op dieselfde inligting geskoei. Maar dit voel vir my asof die praktyk al hoe meer verwag dat die studente dit reeds moes gedoen het. Vroër jare was dit nie so nie, hulle (werkgevers) het jou self gestuur – dit was bekostigbaar gewees. Maar dit raak al hoe duurder vir die ouens in die praktyk om mense te stuur op die kursus. Die outjies wat terugkom van die prakties af - omdat hulle nie Galileo of Amadeus het nie, mag hulle niks doen in die kantore nie. So dit sal eintlik goed wees as hulle direk na N5 ‘n kursus doen. En dan daarna nog prakties kon doen na hulle die kwalifikasie het.” (L2) *(Any GDS training – they are all based on more or less the same information. But it feels to me as if the industry expects that students must have completed it already. Previously this was not the case; they (employers) sent you – it was affordable. But it is getting more and more expensive for employers in industry to send staff on the training. The students that come back from practical training – because they do not have Galileo or Amadeus, they cannot do anything in the office. It will be good if they can do it after N5 and then they can do practical training after they have obtained the qualification.)*

(iv) Tour Guide qualification

With regards to students wanting to work in the tour operating industry as tour guides, respondents mentioned the importance of obtaining a tour guide qualification. Should students want to drive tourists around, they also need a professional drivers’ permit (PDP). This training is not included in the national tourism curriculum. Tourist Guide training is very costly and this is part of the reason why many students can not obtain the qualification on their own.

“Miskien ‘n toergidskursus as deel van die kursus. Die werk het my op ‘n “site guide” kursus gestuur maar ek dink dit sal goed wees as mens reeds met ‘n kwalifikasie as toergids kan begin in die bedryf.” (G5) *(Maybe a tour guiding course as part of the programme. My employer sent me on a site guide course but I think it will be good if you can start in the industry with a qualification as a tourist guide.*

(v) Marketing and management training

Many respondents mentioned the importance of including additional topics about the management and marketing of tourism businesses. The national tourism curriculum includes a few topics related to this. Although some marketing terms and definitions are covered in the Travel Office Procedures N4 and N6 curriculum, it is a condensed overview of specific topics. Many respondents referred to social media and the fact that students must understand the importance of social media for the success of a business. Social media is discussed again later in this chapter.

“I think it is necessary just to get an overview of what it is like on management level. How do they see things? What is expected on that level? So that you know how does the head of the company think? What is the vision and goals of the company? The responsibilities of such a person.” (L6)

“Dit is die heel belangrikste goed. Mens gaan mos nou nie dadelik iemand wat prakties doen laat bemarking doen nie, maar na ‘n paar maande wat hulle jou produkte ken, beslis. Die teorie daarvan is baie belangrik. Ek spandeer die meeste van my tyd aan bemarking – 60%. Res van die tyd aan bestuur. So dit is die twee belangrikste goed. Veral in die toerismebedryf waar daar so baie kompetisie is, jy moet êrens vir jou ‘n voetspoor uitkerf. Jy moet dus jou kliënte elke maand gaan besoek en vra of hulle gelukkig was met die vorige toer, hoe gaan dit, ens.” (E15) *(It is the most important thing. We will not let someone who is doing practical do marketing immediately, but after they have known your products for a few months, absolutely. The theory behind it is important. I spend most of my time doing marketing – 60%. Rest of the time is management. So they are the two most important things. Especially in the tourism industry where there is a lot of competition and you have to carve out a footprint for yourself. You have to go and visit your clients every month to ask if they were happy with the previous tour, how they are, etc.)*

According to respondents, marketing is at the heart of the tourism industry and students must understand and be able to do marketing in a tourism environment to ensure the sustainability of any business. Employers stated the fact that marketing should be included in the national tourism curriculum. As example a response of one respondent is listed below:

“Baie belangrik ja, ons grootste ding gaan oor “sales”. Bemarking en “sales” gaan hand aan hand. Ons het baie “Marketing” studente en hulle doen baie goed – want hulle is “sales driven”. Ek dink dit is belangriker as bestuursopleiding.” (E11) *(Very important yes, the biggest aspect is about sales.*

Marketing and sales go hand in hand. We have many marketing students and they do well – because they are sales driven. I think it is more important than management training.)

Graduates agreed with employers about the inclusion of marketing and management in the national tourism curriculum. As example a response of one respondent is listed below:

“Bemarking – beslis ja, veral as dit stil is. Dan kan mens goed doen. Ons gebruik nou maar vir Groupon en Daddy's Deals – ek is nie baie kreatief met Bemarking nie – en ons het dit nooit as vak gehad nie. So dit sal help. En Bestuur ja beslis – veral hoe om personeel te hanteer en jou standpunt te maak.” (G8) (Marketing – definitely yes, especially when it is quiet. It will help. We use Groupon and Daddy's Deals – I am not creative with Marketing – never had it as subject. So it will help me. And Management yes, definitely, especially how to handle your staff and state your point of view.)

Lecturers agreed that marketing should be included in the national tourism curriculum. As example a response of one lecturer is listed below:

“Ek dink so – want kyk hoeveel van ons studente gaan aan en doen ‘n kursus in Bemarking omdat hulle self heel moontlik voel daar is ‘n gaping. Want sodra jy wil ingaan in verkope in toerisme dan gaan jy noodwendig nog ‘n kursus moet doen. Jy gaan nie direk daarin kan stap nie. Wat nie noodwendig hoef te wees nie – as dit beter gedek kan word in een van ons vakke dan dink ek dit behoort genoeg te wees.” (L2) (I think so – look at how many students continue and complete a Marketing course, perhaps because they feel there is a gap. As soon as you want to go into sales in tourism then you will have to complete another course. You cannot just walk into it directly. And it does not have to be that way – if it is covered better in one of the subjects it should be enough.)

(vi) Exposure to social media

Further to this conversation, many respondents referred specifically to the importance of including a module on social media in the national tourism curriculum. Linked to that is teaching students how to make online bookings (using for example Trip Advisor and Bookings.com) and using internet marketing (for example Gumtree, Facebook, Twitter and Google Ad Words) as part of a business's marketing strategy. Although lecturers make use of these sites as examples during classes and expose students to them, additional exposure and confidence utilising these tools are required. Employers refer to the fact that social

media are used in business regularly. The use of on-line booking sites is also discussed under section 4.4.2.5. that deals with computer skills.

“Studente behoort ook blootstelling te kry aan “on-line” besprekings en ‘social media” omdat dit so groot deel van ons bestaan is. Hoe “social media” gebruik kan word tot voordeel van jou besigheid en vir bemarking.” (E5) *(Students should also be exposed to on-line bookings and social media because it is such a big part of our existence. How social media can be used to the advantage of your business and for marketing.)*

“Ons gebruik dit, Facebook en Twitter. Maar wat veral groot is in die Toerismebedryf is Trip Advisor en Google Ad Words. So dit is baie belangrik om vir die studente te leer daarvan. Hoe dit werk – hulle moet dit ken en verstaan – dit sal baie goed wees as hulle verstaan hoe dit werk.” (E15) *(We use it, Facebook and Twitter. But what is especially big in the tourism industry is Trip Advisor and Google Ad Words. So it is very important to teach the students about this. How it works. They must know and understand it – it will be very good if they understand how it works.)*

Graduates working in the industry also commented on the fact that it would have empowered them when entering the workplace if they knew how to make on-line bookings. As example a response of one respondent is listed below:

“Daar is baie besprekingsprogramme wat gebruik word bv. Bookings.com, SA Venues, Nightsbridge, Direct Hotel, Safari Now – ek sou graag wou weet hoe dit werk voor ek hier begin het. Dit is ook maklik om vir die student in die klasse dit te wys.” (G7) *(There are many reservations programmes that are used for example Bookings.com, SA Venues, Nightsbridge, Direct Hotel, Safari Now – I would have liked to know how it works before I started working here. It is easy to show students in a classroom how it works.)*

One of the lecturers who worked as the Marketing Manager of a company for many years also mentioned the importance of Social Media.

“Bemarking gekombineer met sosiale media kan werk. Omdat sosiale media so impak het. En die kinders het nie ‘n benul van die implikasies van die gebruik van sosiale media nie. As hulle weet hoe om dit te gebruik as ‘n bemarkingsinstrument – want dit is “the way of the future”. Ek kan nie dink dat firmas daarsonder kan bestaan nie. Dit gaan vir hulle noodsaaklik wees om dit te kan bedryf. En hoe gaan hulle weet as hulle nie ‘n Bemarkingsagtergrond het nie. So die twee gaan vir my hand aan hand.” (L4) *(Marketing combined with social media can work. Because social media have such an impact. And the children do not have an idea of the implications of the use of social media. If they know how to use it as a marketing tool – it is the way of the future. I cannot see how firms exist without*

it. It is vital that they must be able to operate it. And how will they know if they do not have a Marketing background. So for me the two go hand in hand.)

(vii) Practical tips with regards to finances

Respondents (graduates and employers) identified the need to include practical financial topics in the curriculum. Students complete Travel Office Procedures N4 and N5 with some reference to banking and an in depth study of introductory accounting (See Addendum D). In Travel Services N6 they have to compile tour plans within a set budget and do the costing for these tours. The need that has been identified by respondents is to include practical aspects that are expected of students in the workplace. These can include how to operate a credit card machine, how to complete EFT transfers, cashing-up and terms and conditions on policies.

“Mens leer baie van toerisme terwyl jy “swot” maar ek dink dis die praktiese goed wat mens nie leer nie: hoe werk ‘n kredietkaartmasjien, hoe werk ‘n “till”, bietjie meer finansiële goed, hoe werk jy met kontant, selfs ek het nie geweet nie. Ek dink dit sal vir hulle help. Hantering van kontant, basiese sisteem in plek sit – tjekboeke, wat doen jy as die krag af is met die kredietkaartmasjien. Ek dink meer “real-life situations”. Dit is die klein praktiese goed wat saak maak. Miskien ook goed rondom “terms and conditions”.” (E11) (You learn a lot about tourism when you study but I think it is the practical things that you do not learn: how to operate a credit card machine, how to work a till, more financial things, how do you work with cash, even I did not know. I think it will help them. Handling of cash, putting basic systems in place: cheque books, what to do with a credit card machine when there is a power failure. I think more real-life situations. It is the small practical things that matter. Maybe also things around terms and conditions.)

The data indicated that students need additional knowledge to equip them better for employment. It is clear that a distinction should be made between knowledge that all students require as part of a tourism curriculum and knowledge specific to one sector of the tourism industry as identified by respondents from specific sectors and as discussed during this chapter.

4.4.1.3 Knowledge required of the practical tourism environment

Respondents indicated that students require practice-based knowledge. Mixed responses were obtained with regards to the most effective way to obtain this knowledge. In Table 4.5 the various responses are listed and the verbatim responses follow the table. The requirement of the national tourism curriculum in terms of practical exposure is listed.

Table 4.5: Data summary on practice based knowledge

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mixed responses with regards to the value of practical training during the programme. -Concerns raised about the value of only 10 days practical work during holidays – especially during low season. -Suggested that students finish the theory component first. -Could be more valuable if students work on a regular basis for example a few days each week. -Completing (for example) six months of practical training at a time might be more valuable. -Will rather employ someone with previous experience in the sector. 	<p>The curriculum states: Arrangements must be made with local hotels/guest houses/country inns/game lodges for students to follow a co-operative education programme. A period of at least three months during the 18/24 months of the tourism instructional programme is highly recommended. The nature of the observation and work during the experiential period will depend on the knowledge and skills of the student, the type of accommodation enterprise in the local area, and the relationship between the college and such enterprises.</p>

The curriculum states that it is recommended that students complete at least 3 months of co-operative education during the 18 months theoretical component on campus. Currently, at Boland College, students are required to work during holidays and weekends. Due to various factors (the ‘heavy’ curriculum that must be completed in limited time, the amount of contact hours prescribed by the DHET versus the amount of time available within a semester, limited placements for students in some areas), students do not work during the academic semester and are encouraged to work at least 30 days during weekends and holidays and not the required three months.

Respondents had mixed responses about the value of practical training during the 18 months students are on campus. Issues raised included the fact that students usually obtain very little

‘real’ exposure during the few days they are at an establishment. Most students complete mundane tasks for example filing, cleaning, making coffee, etc. Employers often state that it is too much effort to train a student to be of real assistance in an establishment and then they only stay for 10 days. Seeing that students have to work during holidays – including June – employers are often frustrated that students need placements during the traditional ‘low’ season. On the other hand, it will be stated throughout this chapter that students require more exposure to the tourism industry. Employers stated the following:

“Studente wat in die vakansies wil kom prakties doen vir ‘n paar dae is vir ons baie sleg want hulle kan niks doen nie. Ons neem gewoonlik nie sulke studente nie. Studente wat klaar gestudeer het en dan voltyds kom werk is beter.” (E1) *(Students that want to come for a few days and complete their practical training during the holidays are very bad for us because they cannot do anything. We usually do not take such students. Students that have completed their studies and come and work full time are better.)*

“Die ander probleem is dat studente in Junie wil prakties doen, dit maak nie sin nie want dit is nie ons besige seisoen nie. Ons is self leeg in die winter en het dus nie nog iemand nodig nie.” (E5) *(The other problem is that students want to do practical training in June; it does not make sense because it is not our busy season. We are empty during winter and do not need someone.)*

Employers requested that they receive clearer guidelines with regards to what Boland College expects from employers when they accept students to complete their practical training. A more formalised process of work-integrated learning will have to be investigated.

“Ek dink daar kan ook vir ons beter riglyne gegee word waaraan die studente blootstelling moet kry terwyl hulle in die vakansies by ons prakties doen.” (E8) *(I think you must give us better guidelines in terms of what students should be exposed to while they are doing their practical with us during the holidays.)*

Although graduates also agree that ten days might not be sufficient to learn the inner workings of an establishment, the value of practical training, even if short, should not be underestimated:

“Tien dae is te min om te leer van ‘n hotel. Jy moet meer tyd gegee word om alle fasette te ervaar.” (G6) *(Ten days is too short to learn about a hotel. You need to be given more time to learn all the facets.)*

“Ek dink ook die feit dat ek prakties gedoen het gedurende my studies het baie gehelp. Ek het by ‘n gastehuis gewerk en ek dink dit was baie waardevol om my voor te berei vir die toekoms.” (G7) *(I also think the fact that I completed practical training during my studies helped. I worked at a guest house and I think it was very valuable to prepare me for my future.)*

Some employers, graduates and lecturers prefer it if students complete their 18 month theoretical component and then start working full time in the industry.

“Vir ons sou dit beter wees om iemand aan die einde van die opleiding te kry. Aan die begin moet jy die heeltid hulle hand vashou. Dit sal nie lekker wees om iemand op te lei en dan moet die persoon teruggaan Kollege toe nie. Dan moet jy weer iemand anders soek en oplei – en dit vat baie tyd.” (E7) *(For us it will be better to get someone at the end of their training. In the beginning you have to hold their hand the whole time. It will not be nice to train someone and then they must go back to College. Then you must find someone else and train them – and that takes a lot of time.)*

“Nee, die hele prentjie is belangrik – so eers N4 tot N6 en dan begin werk. Dit was vir my belangrik dat ek eers klaar “geswot” het en nou voltyds kan werk.” (G2) *(No, the whole picture is important, so first complete N4 to N6 and then start working. It was important for me to first finish my studies and then start working full time.)*

Employers prefer students that have experience in the industry. The question arises as to how they will obtain the required experience without being given opportunities to gain such experience. Many respondents mentioned that students need more exposure to the tourism industry and a good way to obtain such exposure is by observing what happens in the workplace. Throughout this chapter it was stated that students require more exposure to the tourism industry. Some respondents suggested that students should first complete their theoretical component and then start working full time. The concern was raised that students would then have no (or limited) exposure to the industry when they start their careers.

On the one hand the challenge is to make sure students do obtain exposure to the tourism industry before they start a career. On the other hand, employers do not want to accommodate students for short periods of time where they cannot pull their weight at an establishment. The suggestion is then made that students do complete practical training but for a longer period of time, similar to what Universities of Technology require their students to complete during their experiential training period (6 months). Many respondents are in support of this type of practical training component as can be seen from the responses to follow. The Department of Higher Education and Training will have to consider formalising the practical component they require from students in this programme to be a more formal, work-integrated learning experience. Employers, graduates and lecturers were in favour of longer practical training periods:

“Dit is vir ons beter as die studente byvoorbeeld 6 maande aaneen prakties doen, soos die CPUT studente – hulle doen van Oktober tot Maart prakties en dit is ons besigste tyd. As die studente vir ‘n kort tydjie hier is, kry hulle nie baie blootstelling nie. Hulle sit maar baie hier rond en lees. Ek dink as studente ‘n deel studeer en dan prakties doen, en weer studeer sal dit baie goed wees. Dan kan hulle die boeke kennis wat hulle het gaan toepas. Dan die ervarings terugbring klas toe en so ook bymekaar leer.” (E10) *(It is better for us if students do (for example) 6 months practical continuously, like the CPUT students – they do practical training between October and March – which is our busiest time. If students are here for a short time, they do not get a lot of exposure. They sit here and read. I think if students study a part and then do practical training and then study again it will be good. Then they can apply the book knowledge. They can take their experiences back to the classroom and also learn from one another.)*

“As ek my vergelyk met die CPUT student hier, maak dit sin. Want sy gaan nou terug klas toe vir 6 maande na haar prakties. So dit maak haar oë oop – sy kan nou teruggaan klas toe met daai kennis. Ons het net 10 dae op ‘n plek gewerk in die vakansie, jy kan mos nie veel leer nie. Jy sien altyd net die goeie kant, en as jy dan voltyds werk kom jy agter dit is eintlik glad nie so nie. So jy sal beter voorbereid wees.” (G8) *(If I compare myself to the CPUT student here, it makes sense. Because she is now going back to class after her six months of practical training. So it opens her eyes – she can go back to class with that knowledge. We only worked for ten days at an establishment during holidays; you cannot really learn a lot. You just see the good side, and when you start working full time you realise that it is not the case. So you will be better prepared.)*

“Ek weet hulle doen prakties maar hulle het meer praktiese ervaring tussen N5 en N6 nodig. Ek stel voor hulle doen meer praktiese opleiding tussen N5 en N6 waar ons hulle baie beter monitor. En dat hulle dan blootgestel word en dan kom hulle terug. Hulle het nou hierdie ervaring en hulle gaan sommer groot word. Ek het dit in PE gesien met die “hospitality” studente. Die N6 studente kom terug en hulle kom heel anders terug. En ons werk aan die probleme wat hulle gehad het in die klas. Dit is nogals in toerisme, wat baie prakties is, baie goed. En dat mens vir hulle leiding kan gee, hulle kan besoek en lei. Hulle is baie jonk – hulle studeer vir een en ‘n halwe jaar en dan gaan werk hulle.” (L3)

(I know they do practical training but they need more practical experience between N5 and N6. I suggest they do more practical training between N5 and N6 where we monitor them better. Then they can obtain exposure and come back. They have this experience and they grow up. I saw it in Port Elizabeth with the hospitality students. The N6 students come back and they come back totally different. We work on the problems they had in the class. This is very important in tourism that is very practical, so it is very good. Also so that one can guide them and visit them. They are very young - they study for one and a half years and then they go and work.)

As stated earlier, once candidates obtain the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism issued by the The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) they can further their education by completing 18 months practical training in a tourism related business. Upon completion, graduates can submit their N4 – N6 certificates as well as evidence (in the form of a letter from the company they worked at) to the DHET. The DHET then evaluates the experience obtained against the content of the N6 subjects before awarding a Diploma in Tourism to candidates. It is a very cumbersome process and during 2012 only five students were awarded a Diploma in Tourism (Wanza, 2013). This is perhaps an issue for further research.

It could be argued that after obtaining the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism, students are not finished with their studies because they still have to complete the practical component. The challenge is that students receive their Certificates and in their eyes they have graduated because they never return to the College. The practical component is not compulsory and many students do not apply for the Diploma in Tourism as mentioned earlier.

One respondent stated that it should be explained to industry that students have only completed the theoretical component of their course and are not fully qualified before they have completed the practical component. In other words, students applying for positions are indeed applying for a placement for their practical training and should not be seen as a fully qualified employee. Another lecturer referred to the students of Boland College that have limited exposure when they have completed the programme and the challenge we face to equip students for employment:

“Gaan werk in die bedryf of gaan wees in die bedryf. Tydens die kursus – ek sien net nie waar ons tyd kan afstaan nie. Of andersins direk na die kursus. Daar moet ‘n tydperk wees waar hulle naïwiteit en onskuld uit hulle uit gevryf kan word. Gepamper kan word. Mense moet nie noodwendig die verwagting hê dat hulle ‘n volledige geslypte persoon kry nie – daar is sekere goed wat net nie daar is nie. Ek dink baie kere is die bedryf nie heeltemal ingelig oor die kaliber outjie wat ons partykeer trek nie. Hulle het die verkeerde verwagting van die soort student wat ons nou getrek het. Die afgelope hoeveel jaar. (L4) *(Go work in the industry or go and be in the industry. During the course – I do not see where we can give more time. Or otherwise directly after the course. There must be a time where their innocence and naivety can be rubbed out of them. When they can be pampered. People must not necessarily have the expectation that they are getting a well-rounded person – certain things are simply just not there. I think many times in the industry – they are not fully informed about the caliber student that we sometimes have. They have the wrong expectation of the type of student we are now getting. The last couple of years.)*

“Ook moet daar aan die industrie gekommunikeer word dat die studente wat hier klaarmaak ‘n internship moet doen – hulle is dus nog besig met hulle kwalifikasie.” (L4) *(Also, it must be communicated to the industry that the students who finish here must still complete an internship – they are therefore still busy with their qualification.)*

One lecturer proposed that the 18 month practical component that students must complete after the 18 months theoretical component should be included into the national tourism curriculum as one qualification. Currently the focus is on the 18 month theoretical component with very little guidance and support for students to complete their Diploma in Tourism. If it is included in the tourism programme, similar to other institutions Co-operative Education or Work Integrated Learning programmes, students can be motivated and

guided to complete the full qualification. Another suggestion was made to include at least six months practical training as part of the qualification. Students can then only graduate with their N6-certificate upon completion of at least six months of practical training.

“Hulle moet langer werk want almal doen nie die 18 maande prakties na die kursus nie. Na die 6 maande prakties kan hulle dalk ‘n portefeulje inhandig – en dan word die N6 sertifikaat eers uitgereik. Dalk na N4 tot N6 om dit ‘n twee jaar kursus te maak. Hulle moet mos werk vir iets.” (L5) *(They must work for longer periods, because they do not all complete their 18 months practical after the course. After six months practical they can hand in a portfolio and then only obtain their N6 certificate. Perhaps after N4 to N6 to make it a two year course. They must work for something.)*

In addition to the above, another suggestion was made that students work a couple of days per week while studying. As a key issue that was identified by the respondents is the lack of exposure students have, this is a suggestion that should be investigated. As mentioned earlier, within the academic timetable this might be a challenge. Perhaps if the programme can be extended to two years, it might be an option. This will be discussed again at the end of this chapter.

“My opinie is hulle moet verseker gaan werk, een dag ‘n week. Sodat hulle die ondervinding kan kry. Kan sien hoe dit is, hoe lyk ‘n professionele maatskappy, hoe gedra jy jou? Hoe trek jy aan? Hoe lyk jy? Hoe “present” jy jouself? Jy moet op tyd wees, jy kan nie laat wees nie. En dat hulle kan sien hoe dit is, dat hulle dit kan ervaar. As jy vir hulle sê daar is brosjures, gaan daardeur – in ‘n agentskap gaan hulle baie meer blootstelling kry. Die “reps” kom in die reisagentskappe in, dan kan hulle kontak maak met hulle – byvoorbeeld die ouens van Beachcomber – dat mens kan sien hoe tree mens op teenoor hulle, watter vrae word gevra. Hulle kan hulle vra: hoe werk die agentskap?” (L1) *(My opinion is that they must go and work, one day per week. So that they can obtain experience. So that they can see how it is, what does a professional company look like, how do you act? What do you wear? What do you look like? How do you present yourself? You must always be on time, you cannot be late. So that they can see how it is, and they can experience it. If you tell them there are brochures, look at them – in a travel agency they will gain so much more experience. The reps come into travel agencies and then they can make contact with them – for example the people from Beachcomber – so that one can see how you act towards them, what questions should be asked. They can ask them how an agency works.)*

4.4.1.4 Ability to apply knowledge in a working environment is vital

From the interviews it became clear that students are expected to be able to apply the knowledge learnt at the college in a working environment. Such issues are listed in Table 4.6 and suggestions by respondents as to how students can obtain more exposure to the tourism industry are discussed following the table. The practical application required by the national tourism curriculum is listed.

Table 4.6: Data summary on the application of knowledge in a working environment

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Great concern about the limited exposure students have to the tourism industry. -Students lack the ability to apply theory learnt in the classroom. -Should include more industry visits during the programme. -Students should attend industry networking functions for more exposure. 	<p>The curriculum states: Practical marks are allocated after the completion of each module. The student's proven achievement during relevant work experience in practice (employer's evaluation: tick sheet) and practical work (portfolio compiled and assignments) are considered. Practical application in the form of case studies, applying statements to job situations (by means of role-play or simulated situations) will, therefore, form part of the examination papers.</p>

As discussed in a previous section, the curriculum states that it is recommended that students complete at least 3 months of co-operative education during the 18 months theoretical component on campus. Currently, at Boland College, students are required to work during holidays and weekends. Due to various factors stated earlier, students do not work during the academic semester and are encouraged to work at least 30 days during weekends and holidays and not the required three months.

Concern was raised by respondents that students have limited exposure to the tourism industry. It was also mentioned that students have limited 'life' exposure. Many suggestions in this respect followed from such comments.

"Ek dink ook die teorie wat geleer word moet meer geïmplementeer word. Mens leer baie teorie maar die geleentheid om dit prakties in die bedryf toe te pas is min. Om meer industrie besoeke te doen sal ook help, om te sien hoe lyk hotelle ens. Ons het wel op uitstappies gegaan maar ek dink meer

blootstelling aan die bedryf is belangrik.” (G4) *(I also think the theory that is taught must be implemented better. One learns a lot of theory but the opportunity to apply it practically in the industry is limited. More visits to the industry will help, to see what the hotels look like, etc. We did go on educational outings but I think more exposure to the industry is important.*

“Hoe meer blootstelling jy kry aan verskillende velde in die bedryf hoe beter. Dit gaan jou teoretiese kennis ‘n bietjie van ‘n beter onderbou gee. Dit gaan ook help met die keuse van ‘n beroep – jy gaan meer blootstelling kry van wat alles in toerisme gedoen kan word. Jy dink dalk jy wil nie ‘n reisagent wees nie, maar omdat jy blootstelling kry, gee iemand dalk ‘n goeie evaluering en dit mag dan wees dat jy dan blom. Die situasie gee jou die geleentheid om dinge van jouself in die praktyk te leer. Vir ‘n student is dit van onskatbare waarde. Die organisasie mag dalk gefrustreerd wees omdat jy voel jy gaan skaars iets met die student bereik.” (E14) *(The more exposure you get to the various sectors of the industry the better. It will give you the ability to apply theoretical knowledge better. It will also help with the choice of a career – you will get more exposure of all the aspects of what is done in tourism. You might not want to be a travel agent, but because you obtain exposure, someone gives you a good evaluation and it might be that you flourish. The situation gives you the opportunity to learn things about yourself. For the student it is of immeasurable value.)*

Throughout the national tourism curriculum for each subject it states that students should “apply the above statement to job situations”. Many students have not travelled at all and their exposure to tourism is very limited. Within the financial and time constraints of any institution one can question if it is possible to expose students adequately, and what the definition of adequately in this context entails. Within a diverse student population it will be a challenge, as each student will have a different level of previous exposure.

“Die studente wat ons nou kry vir N4, “travelling” is vir hulle ‘n “luxury” wat hulle nie ervaar in die huis nie. Dit voel vir my a.g.v. die geld tekort word daar nie op vakansie gegaan nie. So hulle ken nie die basiese begrippe soos wat ons ken in “travel” nie. Daar is geen persepsie van ruimte nie – hoeveel kilometer van hier tot in Kaapstad – hoe lank vat dit om tot daar te ry. Nou moet jy in perspektief sit waar sit die Wes-Kaap teenoor Gauteng. Hulle algemene kennis is baie swak want hulle kry nie die geleentheid om te reis nie. Hulle ken byvoorbeeld glad nie ‘n atlas nie – weet nie hoe om dit te gebruik nie. Daar is van hulle wat dit die eerste keer sien as hulle hier hom – wat is ‘n atlas, hoe werk dit ens.” (L2) *(The students that we get for N4 now, travelling is a luxury that they do not experience at home. It feels to me it is because of a lack of money that they do not go on holiday. So they do not know the basic terms that we use in travel. There is no perception of space – how far is it from here to Cape Town – how long does that it take to drive there. Now you must put it into perspective – where is the Western Cape in relation to Gauteng. Their general knowledge is very bad because they do not get*

the opportunity to travel. They do not know an atlas – they do not know how to use it. Some of them see it for the first time when they get here – what is an atlas, how does it work, etc.)

At Boland College students do undertake educational visits to tourist destinations and establishments (Stellenbosch, Robben Island, Table Mountain, Garden Route, West Coast, Wine Farms, etc.). Guest speakers are invited to the classrooms to share their knowledge and expertise with students. Any tourism programme allows for the application of theory due to the nature of the subjects.

Lecturers are constantly relating theory to practice by sharing their own industry experiences, using brochures, magazines and trends from industry as examples. Lecturers attend industry workshops and use on-line tools to stay informed about the latest trends in the tourism industry. Lecturers were asked how they bring the industry into their classrooms.

“Ek gebruik altyd voorbeelde van wat ek gedoen het, waar ek gewerk het, waar ek verkeerd gegaan het, waar ek droog gemaak het. Ek moet eerlikwaar sê toe ek nou Galileo gedoen het, dis baie lekker, want mens kan heeltyd daai voorbeelde gebruik. Dit is baie belangrik dat dosente op sulke kursusse gaan, dan bring jy weer daai inligting in. Soos jy maak met jou gassprekers – dit sal “stunning” wees as mens een maal per week so periode kan ingooi waar mens gassprekers kry. Net om dit meer interessant te maak.” (L1) (I always use examples of what I did, where I worked, mistakes I made. I must honestly say when I completed Galileo recently; it was very nice, because you can use those examples continuously. It is very important that lecturers go on these types of courses, and then you can use the information in the class. Like you do with guest speakers, it will be stunning if we can have guest speakers once per week. Just to make it more interesting.)

“Ek lees baie tydskrifte: TNW, Business Traveller, dit help baie veral vir my vak. Ek kyk baie in die GSA – hulle gee inligting daar oor goed wat verander het. Die industrie “workshops” wat ons bywoon is baie “nice” – dis jammer dat ons so min geleentheid kry om dit by te woon oor die werksdruk.” (L2) (I read many magazines: TNW, Business Traveller, it helps especially in my subject. I look in the GSA often – give the students information about things that might have changed. The industry workshops that we attend are very nice – just a pity that we do not get the opportunity often because of the work load.)

“Ek probeer vir hulle baie brosjures wys. Om vir hulle te kan sê dit is hoe dit gedoen word. Die vak is baie lewendig so ek wys vir hulle relevante goed in die nuus, goed wat gebeur in die land. Ek probeer vir hulle die vak “link” aan goed wat nou huidiglik gebeur in die land. Ek gebruik power point, internet, dvd’s en al daai goed. Ek wens ons kon You Tube ook gebruik.” (L3) *(I try to show them many brochures. To show them how it is done. The subject is very alive so I can show them things in the news, things that happen in the country. I try to link the subject with things that are currently happening. I use power point, internet, DVD’s – all those things. I wish I can also use You Tube videos in my classroom.)*

The amount of exposure to travel students obtain ties in with the previous discussion about the amount of practical experience that students obtain during their studies. If both these aspects can be addressed it will hopefully result in students having better exposure to travel and more opportunities to apply theory learnt to real-life situations. The importance of opportunities to apply theory in practical situations has been mentioned throughout the chapter – and again by employers below.

“Baie van die goed wat hulle doen by julle moet hulle sien hoe dit prakties toegepas word in die bedryf – dit kan nie net boeke kennis wees nie.” (E2) *(A lot of the things that they do with you, they must see how it is applied practically in the industry – it can not only be book knowledge.)*

“I think for most students entering the world of work the challenge is to apply the work that they have studied in textbooks in the workplace. They understand the context better if they actually experience it in real life. Once students start working at a hotel they learn the systems and procedures of the hotel. When, for example, handling complaints, students must be able to understand what the things that they can control and handle are and when to refer it to a manager. And then, when they do refer the complaint, to learn from the manager how to handle the complaint. So that next time, they know what to do.” (E9)

The importance of networking in the tourism industry should be explained to students. They must understand that their opportunities for employment increase if they are seen in the industry and meet role-players of the tourism industry. One employer suggested the following:

“Ek dink ook die studente moet die netwerkfunksies van Stellenbosch360 bywoon. Dit gaan eintlik maar alles oor “networking” in die bedryf en daar ontmoet mens baie mense. Hulle kan daar baie goeie kontakte maak.” (E12) *(I think students must attend the networking functions of Stellenbosch360. It is all about networking in the industry and there you meet a lot of people. They will build up good contacts there.)*

4.4.1.5 Knowledge required of specific establishments

It became clear from the interviews that each establishment in the tourism industry has their own systems and procedures in place. Table 4.7 lists some responses from respondents. Although establishments offer in-house training when students first start working, basic knowledge about the industry is required before students can start working as discussed in the section following the table.

Table 4.7: Data summary on knowledge required specific to individual establishments

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Most establishments offer in-house training as students are taught to use systems specific to the organisation. -Responses made include that industry works differently from what is taught in the classroom and students learn the most while in the workplace although aspects taught in classroom must be learnt to have a better understanding. -Many aspects are only learnt with experience. 	Not applicable.

Employers indicated that students undergo in-house training at their establishments. This is obviously not something that forms part of a national tourism curriculum but an important

issue as identified by respondents and relevant to this study. The in-house training consists of various aspects as listed below.

“Studente volg ons bestuurder soos ‘n skaduwee en ons stel die student aan die gaste voor as ‘die student’ sodat die gaste ook weet. Dit werk vir ons goed – dan weet ons gaste ook dit is ‘n student wat prakties doen en wat om te verwag. Die gaste weet dan die student “oefen” om iemand in te boek en die student voel meer gemaklik want die bestuurder is naby om te help.” (E4) *(Students follow our manager like a shadow and we introduce the student to guests as a student. It works for us – the guests know it is a student busy with practical and know what to expect. The guests know that the student is practicing to check someone in and the student feels more at ease because the manager is close by to assist.)*

“They get exposure to all aspects of the hotel and must work shifts in housekeeping before they start at reception. They must understand how it all comes together to be able to function properly in a hotel. We will train them on the systems of the hotel, how we do things, reservations etc. and then they will work a couple of shifts with someone else before they start working on their own.” (E9)

Systems and procedures often work differently in practice than what is taught in theory as they are specific to each establishment suiting the requirements of the specific institution. This is true for most establishments and any new employee will have to undergo some form of in-house training as mentioned previously. Perhaps the issue is in which respects students must be trained (or re-trained) at an establishment and whether this is as a result of aspects that are lacking in the national tourism curriculum. Most employers and graduates agree that one only really starts learning in the workplace and therefore the importance of a well-executed practical component is vital.

“Die meeste van die goed wat ek weet het ek ook hier geleer. Dit is moeilik om spesifieke goed te noem wat julle by die kursus kan sit want elke agentskap het ‘n spesifieke manier van besprekings maak. Ek sou nie te veel daarop fokus nie. Elke agentskap het hulle eie sisteme, bewyse, betalings, ens. Die toerismebedryf is so wyd dat dit moeilik is om ‘n kursus spesiaal vir ‘n agentskap te ontwerp. Elke student wil nie in ‘n reisagentskap gaan werk nie.” (E1) *(Most of the things I know, I learnt here. It is difficult to mention things you can add to the course as every agency has a specific way of making reservations. I would not focus on that a lot. Every agency has its own systems, vouchers, payments, etc. The tourism industry is so vast that it is difficult to design a course especially for one agency.)*

“Ek het gedink ek was goed voorbereid – maar as jy daar instap is dit altyd anders. Jy werk saam met ander mense en ander prosesse en dan moet jy vinnig leer.” (G1) (*I thought I was well prepared – but when you walk in there everything is different. You work with other people and different processes and you must learn quickly.*)

4.4.2 Skills

The required skills identified by respondents during interviews included good communication skills, the ability to offer excellent service to guests, general life skills, proper telephone etiquette, acting and dressing in a professional manner and computer skills. Respondents stated that students must have exposure to travel in order to understand the global context of tourism.

4.4.2.1 Good communication skills and excellent service is vital

In a service environment, like the tourism industry, good communication skills are vital and this was confirmed by the respondents of this study. Table 4.8 lists the responses with regards to communication skills as well as the fact that students must know how to deal with guests. The topics covered by the national tourism curriculum are listed.

Table 4.8: Data summary on communication skills and service excellence

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
<p>-Students can communicate well with clients and know how to deal with guests.</p> <p>-It also depends on the student and in some cases students do not understand the importance of communicating in a proper manner with guests.</p>	<p>Tourism Communication N4 deals with: The communication process (barriers, interpersonal, verbal, non-verbal, business terminology, direct and indirect, approaches and evaluation), successful human relations (motivation, personality, human emotions, self-esteem, perception, human relations skills, stress), etiquette (personal grooming, dress, suitable greetings, general etiquette and protocol, and telephone etiquette), inter-cultural communication and written communication (correct style, letter writing, seminars, memos) deportment, proper and correct behaviour.</p> <p>Tourism Communication N5 includes: Dealing with enquiries, complaints and conflict (humane</p>

	<p>treatment, sexual harassment). Written Communication (enquiries, complaints, brochures, job application, reports, and itineraries). Presentation Communication (oral communication skills, listening skills, conversation, forms of address, informal speeches, presentations and public speaking, interviews, the seminar, graphic and audio visual aids in communication). Advertising (writing of advertisements, notices). Organisational Communication (formal in organisations, informal, meeting procedures).</p> <p>In Hotel Reception N6 topics dealt with include dealing with complaints and proper communication with guests.</p>
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Respondents had mixed opinions about how students communicate with guests. Some were of the opinion that students generally communicate well with guests and understand the importance of excellent customer service while other respondents expressed concern about students not realising the importance of effective communication with guests. A study by Vivian (2011) highlighted similar concerns by employers with regards to the poor communication skills of employees in the tourism industry. Tourism Communication N4 and N5 deals with topics related to this. In the subject Hotel Reception N6, topics dealing with handling guests and guest complaints are also covered.

The following employer mentioned the fact that students must understand the bigger picture of excellent service and that listening to guests is key in delivering good service and is ultimately the core of the tourism industry.

“Hulle moet besef jy moet luister na wat kliënte wil hê en dit gee. Jy moet vriendelik wees want dit skep die hele atmosfeer – mense sal tevrede wees met eenvoudiger geriewe as mense baie vriendelik is en baie goeie diens lewer. As die diens swak is en mense onvriendelik gaan iemand beslis nie weer terugkom na ‘n plek toe nie. Ek dink studente moet besef dit is die kern van die toerismebedryf. Die studente kan darem goed kommunikeer en die telefoon antwoord.” (E7) *(They must realise you must listen to what clients want and give that to them. You must be friendly because that sets the atmosphere – people will be satisfied with basic facilities if people are very friendly and deliver excellent service. If the service is bad and people are unfriendly, somebody will definitely not return to*

that place. I think students must realise that is the core of the tourism industry. The students can communicate well and answer the telephone.)

According to some employers, students can communicate well. An example of the response of one respondent is listed below:

“Die studente was plat op die aarde en aanpasbaar. Die studente kan goed kommunikeer met die toeriste. Hulle moet op hulle eie kan werk en die terugvoer van die toeriste is goed.” (E13) (The students were grounded and flexible. The students can communicate well with the tourists. They must be able to work on their own and the feedback from the tourists is good.)

Graduates indicated that they feel that they can communicate well with guests.

“Ek dink ek kan baie goed met mense kommunikeer. Ek het by Hertz agtergekom die mense verstaan as ek vir hulle die kontrakte ens. verduidelik. Dit was nie vir almal maklik om dit te doen nie. Mens kan dit leer maar almal het dit nie. Party mense kan nie goed kommunikeer nie.” (G1) (I think I can communicate well with tourists. I realised while working at Hertz that people understand when I explain contracts etc. to them. That was not easy for everybody. Some people cannot communicate well.)

“Ek het gevoel ek het selfvertroue en kan goed kommunikeer.” (G3) (I felt I had self-confidence and can communicate well.)

Lecturers had some concerns with regards to the communication skills of the students. According to them students do not realise the importance of communicating effectively in the workplace. Lecturers were asked if they think students can communicate well with guests. An example of one of the responses is listed below:

“Ek kan nie eintlik se hulle kommunikasie vaardighede is goed nie. Daar is een of twee wat goed praat die res s'n is uiters swak. Van hulle kan, die wat nie bang is om te praat nie. Die wat bang is om te praat kommunikeer glad nie. Hulle praat te sag, onduidelik – hulle is bang om te praat want hulle het nie selfvertroue nie. Engels is ook nie ‘n huistaal of tweede taal nie.” (L1) (I cannot really say that their communication skills are good. There might be one or two that communicate well, the rest are extremely bad. Some of them can, those that are not afraid to talk. Those that are afraid to talk do not communicate at all. They talk too softly, unclearly – they are afraid to talk because they do not have self-confidence. English is also not their home language or second language.)

According to some employers, the ability to communicate effectively with guests depends on the student. An example of one of the responses is listed below:

“Dit hang absoluut van die persoon af of daar goeie kommunikasie en / of kliëntediens is – hulle doen nie ekstra moeite om die gas se ervaring beter te maak nie. M.a.w. meer te maak as wat die gas verwag. Ons wil die kliënt bederf en dus werk ‘minimum doen’ nie in ons bedryf nie.” (E5) *(It depends on the person if there is good communication and / or client service – some do not make an extra effort to make the experience of the guest better. In other words do more than what the guest expects. We want to spoil the guest and therefore doing the minimum does not work in our industry.)*

4.4.2.2 General life skills required and exposure to travel is important

In Table 4.9 the issues with regards to the students’ lack of life skills and exposure to the tourism industry are listed. A discussion of the verbatim responses follows the table. The topics included in the national tourism curriculum with regards to these issues are listed.

Table 4.9: Data summary on general life skills and exposure to travel

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Great concern as to the limited exposure students have to travel and lack of life skills. -Students should attend industry networking functions for more exposure. -Life skills should be included in the course – a life skills programme can be completed before the start of the programme. -Can teach students certain aspects but if they do not experience it themselves it is not the same. 	<p>In Tourism Communication N4 the following topics are covered: successful human relations (motivation, personality, human emotions, self-esteem, perception, human relations skills, stress), etiquette (personal grooming, dress, suitable greetings, general etiquette and protocol, and telephone etiquette) and inter-cultural communication.</p> <p>Tourism Communication N5 includes dealing with enquiries, complaints and conflict (humane treatment, sexual harassment). Presentation Communication (oral communication skills, listening skills, conversation, forms of address, informal speeches, presentations and public speaking, interviews, the seminar, graphic and audio visual aids in communication).</p>

Throughout respondents expressed concern as to the lack of exposure and general life skills students display. A suggestion was made that a life skills component should be added in the national tourism curriculum. As mentioned earlier the national tourism curriculum does not

incorporate SAQA's twelve critical cross-field outcomes as their key building blocks (Kraak and Hall, 1999). Should this be amended, it can assist with the life skills component to which students seem to need additional exposure. The question is then what the value of the Life Orientation component is that students complete during their Senior Certificate and to what extent a tertiary institution can provide 'life' exposure if not attained at this stage yet. The subjects Tourism Communication N4 and N5 do include topics on certain life skills required by entry-level employees in the tourism industry. The following responses and suggestions were made by employers with regards to students obtaining more exposure to travel and the tourism industry.

“Ek dink nie hulle kennis kan hulle altyd toepas nie. Hulle leer vinnig maar die probleem is as jy nie letterlik self iets “experience” nie, is dit baie moeilik om vir iemand te verduidelik. As jy nog nooit in Port Elizabeth was nie gaan jy nie weet wat daar aangaan en hoe ver Addo van Port Elizabeth af is nie. Ek dink mens kan “lectures” gee van waar goed is, maar dit gaan baie meer beteken as mens hulle soontoe kan vat. In die Toerismebedryf in SA is dit eintlik maklik om vir hulle alles te wys – 80% van die toeriste in Suid-Afrika wil die Kruger Nasionale Park, Kaapstad en Tuinroete tot by Port Elizabeth sien. So as jy dit gesien het, het jy alles gesien. So dit is miskien iets wat julle kan doen sodat hulle dit kan ervaar en kan sien wat jy daar kan doen.” (E15) *(I do not think they can always apply their knowledge. They learn quickly but the problem is if you do not experience something yourself it is difficult to explain it to someone. If you have never been to Port Elizabeth, you do not know what is going on there, how far Addo is from Port Elizabeth. I think you can give lectures about where things are, but it will mean a lot more if you actually take them there. In the tourism industry in South Africa it is easy to show everybody everything. Most of the tourists in South Africa want to see the Kruger National Park, Cape Town and the Garden Route up to Port Elizabeth. So if you have seen that, you have seen it all. So maybe that is something you can do so that they can see it and experience what you can do there.)*

“Benewens die persoonlikheidsprofiel gaan blootstelling hand aan hand. Iemand wat byvoorbeeld geleer het om 'n kelner te wees maar nog nooit in 'n restaurant geëet het nie mag ook al die akademiese kennis hê maar as jy nie aan die ontvangkant was nie, is dit baie moeilik. Dit hang dus ook af van die verwysingsraamwerk van 'n profiel wat binne die konteks die teorie ophou.” (E14) *(The personality profile goes hand in hand with exposure. Somebody that has learnt to be a waiter but has never eaten in a restaurant might have all the academic knowledge but if you have never experienced it, it is very difficult. It also depends on the frame of reference and the profile that, within a certain context, builds up the theory.)*

Examples of responses and suggestions that were made with regards to the inclusion of life skills training in the national tourism curriculum include the following:

“Doen julle “life skills” met die studente? “Self-awareness”? “Career planning”? Dit is die element wat die swaarste gaan weeg aan die einde van jou kursus. Die afronding van die persoon self (selfbeeld – die hele pakket, staan jy op as iemand die vertrek inkom) is baie belangrik. Klein goedjies wat baie belangrik is, gaan dit met opvoeding saam? Maar mens moenie aanvaar dat dit almal se opvoeding is nie. Dit is nie almal se kultuur nie.” (E14) *(Do you do life skills with the students? Self-awareness? Career planning? This is the element that will weigh the heaviest at the end of your course. The finishing of the person's self (self-image, the whole package, do you stand up when someone enters the room) is very important. Small things that are very important, are they included in your upbringing? But one should not assume that they are part of everybody's upbringing. It is not everybody's culture.)*

“Ek dink mens moet ‘n afrondingskursus met hulle doen. Jy moet vir hulle sê: jy gaan aansoek doen vir werk. Kyk ons na hulle CV's? Kleredrag? Afronding? Hoe praat mens? Watter vrae kan mens vra? Net ‘n dag wat jy iemand inkry om basic goed met hulle te doen. Netheid, higiëne, “boobs” wat uithang – ek weet dit klink absurd maar daai tipe goed.” (L1) *(I think one must do a finishing course with the students. You must tell them they will have to apply for work. Do we look at their CV's? Clothing? Finishing? How one talks? Which questions can one ask? Just one day to get someone to do the basics with them. Neatness, hygiene, cleavage that shows – I know it sounds crazy, but those types of things.)*

At this point the concept of graduate attributes should be mentioned. During the twelve years that I have been working at a FET College, I have personally experienced that graduates increasingly struggle to find suitable employment after completing their studies (as mentioned earlier). I believe one of the contributing factors is the lack of life skills, also called graduate attributes and the fact that Boland College does not focus enough on the development of these skills in our students. Generic graduate attributes sit at a crucial intersection between many of the challenges pressing upon the higher education sector. They figure prominently in contemporary debates as to the purpose of higher education in our changing world, including for example the relationship between a university education and the world of work (Barrie and Prosser, 2004). Why is this debate not taking place at FET colleges? The critical value of higher education to society lies in its ability to provide

graduates with intellectual capacities and skills that can both enrich society and enhance its development considerably (CHE, 2000). It seems from the data obtained during this study that some students that graduate from Boland College do not possess the above-mentioned skills and capacities to contribute to the economy of their local communities.

One respondent suggested that Boland College starts a mentorship programme. This programme can include a life skills component. It is suggested that basic, generic training should first be provided, for example basic entrepreneurial skills. During this time a prospective student can be mentored by a tourism graduate. The mentor can assist with exposure in the tourism industry, networking opportunities and guidance. Should the person (during that first initial training) prove him- or herself to be suited for a position in the tourism industry the person can then continue with the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism:

“Ek stel ook voor dat daar ‘n tipe mentorskap program is. Oud-studente wat huidige studente mentor. Hulle kan raad gee en ervarings deel wat nogal van waarde kan wees.” (E3) *(I suggest some kind of mentorship programme. Graduates that mentor current students. They can give advice and share experiences that can be of value.)*

“Ek sou wou sien (en dit is iets wat ons gaan aanspreek) dat jy voor julle kursus alreeds ‘n tipe “life skills” / mentorskap program aanbied. Binne ons gemeenskap is daar groot werkloosheid. Almal vertel vir jou toerisme verskaf werk. Niemand sê egter hoe nie. Ons het nou al geidentifiseer dat daar ‘n groot behoefte is om te leer van die “basics” van toerisme. Daar is so baie mense betrokke by toerisme: “plumber”, grafiese ontwerper, en nog vele ander. Daar is ‘n aantal sektore wat inskakel by toerisme, dan is daar ook ‘n groot gros mense wat binne ‘n eerste treetjie inlywing sou kon kry in toerisme deur bloot ‘n kortkursus rondom “tourism awareness and life skills training”. (E14)

(I would like to see (and it is something that we are going to address) that you have some kind of life skills / mentorship programme before your course. Within our community there is a lot of unemployment. Everybody tells you tourism provides jobs. Nobody tells you how. We have identified that there is a great need to learn the basics of tourism. There are so many people involved in tourism – plumbers, graphic designers, etc. There are many sectors involved in tourism, then there are also a lot of people that could gain a first step towards exposure of tourism through a short course about tourism awareness and life skills training.)

4.4.2.3 Proper telephone etiquette is required

Although respondents indicated that some students do display proper telephone etiquette, others require additional training. Table 4.10 contains this information and thereafter follows a discussion of the verbatim responses. This topic is covered in the national tourism curriculum and the relevant topics are listed in the table below.

Table 4.10: Data summary on proper telephone etiquette

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
-Some students fair well while others need additional training.	In Tourism Communication N4 the following topics are covered: successful human relations (motivation, personality, human emotions, self-esteem, perception, human relations skills, stress), etiquette (personal grooming, dress, suitable greetings, general etiquette and protocol, and telephone etiquette).

As answering the telephone in a tourism establishment is very often the first contact with a prospective guest, it is vital that students understand the importance of proper telephone etiquette.

“Telephone etiquette is vital in a hotel – what you first say to a guest. It sets the stage for the future interaction with the guest.” (E9)

Respondents identified that some students understand what appropriate telephone etiquette is and can apply it. As an example, the following response from one respondent was generated:

“Hulle kan ook professioneel oor die telefoon kommunikeer – so daar is nie probleme nie.” (E2) (*They can also communicate professionally over the phone – so that is not a problem.*)

Others respondents mentioned the fact that some students seem shy and this might be due to a lack of self-confidence in the workplace. Once again, it links with the discussion about additional exposure of students to the workplace which will give them confidence in how to

act in the workplace. This topic (self-confidence) is covered in the Tourism Communication syllabus.

“Ons vind ook dat hulle nie altyd weet hoe om hulleself oor die telefoon te “project” nie, m.a.w. die selfoon met selfvertroue antwoord. Ek dink hulle moet sommer in Edgars gaan telefone antwoord. Hulle moet hulleself “record” sodat hulle kan hoor en sien hoe hulle oorkom.” (E3) *(We find that they do not always know how to project themselves over the phone, in other words to answer the phone with self-confidence. I think they must go and answer phones in Edgars. They must record themselves so that they can hear and see how they come across.)*

4.4.2.4 Acting and dressing in a suitable and professional manner is not negotiable

In Table 4.11 the issues with regards to appropriate dress code and professional behaviour in the workplace as identified by respondents are listed. The topics as covered by the national tourism curriculum are compared with these issues. The verbatim responses from respondents follow the table.

Table 4.11: Data summary of appropriate dress code and professional behaviour

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
<p>-In some cases students do not dress and act appropriately. It is required in a service environment.</p> <p>-Students need more training on professional appearance.</p> <p>-Important that employers give specific guidelines to students.</p>	<p>In Tourism Communication N4 the following topics are covered: etiquette (personal grooming, dress, suitable greetings, general etiquette and protocol, and telephone etiquette).</p> <p>In Tourism Communication N5 dealing with enquiries, complaints and conflict (humane treatment, sexual harassment). Presentation Communication (oral communication skills, listening skills, conversation, forms of address, informal speeches, presentations and public speaking).</p> <p>In Hotel Reception N6 the personal qualities and personal appearance of a hotel receptionist are dealt with.</p>

There were mixed opinions from respondents about whether or not students act and dress in an appropriate manner in the workplace. Some employers mentioned that students do dress and act in a professional manner in the workplace. An example of one such respondent's verbatim response is as follows:

“Almal trek eintlik meer formeel aan as wat nodig is aan die begin. Dan kry hulle later die gevoel van wat aanvaarbaar is. Ons sien ook geen kliënte direk nie, so dit is nie nodig om so formeel aan te trek nie. Dit is ook ‘n persoonlike ding wat deurvloei na hoe mens praat en skryf. Ons gee vir hulle duidelike riglyne rondom voorkoms en optrede as hulle hier begin.” (E3) *(Everybody dresses more formally than required in the beginning. Later they get the feeling for what is acceptable. We do not see any clients directly, so it is not necessary to dress so formally. It is a personal thing that ties in with how people talk and write. We give them clear guidelines with regards to appearance and how they should act when they start here.)*

These topics are covered in the Tourism Communication syllabus. Exposure to the industry will assist with this issue as students will learn what acceptable behaviour entails. The student code of conduct at Boland College (Student code of conduct, 2013) provides guidelines for students as to how they are expected to act on campus. It aims to assist in preparing students for employment by providing guidelines with regards to professional behaviour. Lecturers and employers are concerned about this issue:

“Somtyds is hulle kleredrag nie na wense nie, daar is van hulle wat baie kort rokkies dra en die manne se broeke is nie reg nie.” (E13) *(Sometimes their clothing is not appropriate, some of them have very short skirts and the pants of the men are wrong.)*

“Nee, ek twyfel. Hulle maniere is uiters swak in die klas. En mens kan maar vir hulle sê wat hulle moet doen en hulle kyk jou net so aan. My opinie is hulle moet verseker gaan werk, een dag ‘n week.” (L1) *(No, I doubt it. Their manners are really bad in the classroom. And you can tell them what to do, they just look at you. My opinion is that they must definitely go and work, one day per week.)*

4.4.2.5 Excellent computer skills are required as well as sector specific computer software training is required

This discussion ties in with the previous discussion about additional knowledge required by students depending on the sector in which they wish to work (see point 4.4.1.2). Galileo training was mentioned as example. Table 4.12 lists the sector specific computer software skills that students require as identified by respondents. As indicated in the table, no computer training is included in the national tourism curriculum. The verbatim responses from respondents follow the table.

Table 4.12: Data summary on computer skills required

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
-Travel agents require GDS training. -Accommodation sector requires training on e.g. Guest House Manager, Opera, Semper, Nightsbridge, Hotelier. -All sectors require excellent computer skills (sending e-mails, MS Office).	No computer training is included in the national tourism curriculum.

Respondents representing various sectors require students to have some form of computer training. The national tourism curriculum does not include any computer training. In the past, Boland College did include Computer Practice N4 as a subject in the programme. With changes in funding and subsidies from the DHET as mentioned earlier, only the four core

subjects per level can be included. This raises great concern as basic MS Office training is required by all establishments:

“Ek gebruik nie ‘n rekenaar baie in my huidige werk nie, maar elke plek wat jy aansoek doen vir werk vra vir rekenaaropleiding. MS Office – ek dink dis belangrik dat alle studente die “basics” kan doen.” (G6) *(I do not use a computer in my current job, but every place you apply for work asks for computer training. MS Office – I think it is important that students can do the basics.)*

“Ek dink rekenaars as vak is baie belangrik – enige sagteware program. Hier is baie studente wat nie rekenaars ooit gedoen het nie. Rekenaars in “general” is ‘n moet.” (L1) *(I think computers as subject is very important – any software programme. There are many students who have never done computers. It is a must.)*

In addition to this, respondents from the various sectors prefer students to have training or at least some exposure to computer programmes used within the sector, for example:

- Travel Agents for example Galileo or Amadeus (or similar) – as discussed earlier.
- Accommodation establishments for example Guest House Manager, Semper and Opera.

From the responses below from employers and graduates it is clear that there is a significant need from the industry for students to be equipped with the applicable computer skills:

“Dit sal goed wees as studente ook blootstelling aan Guest House Manager, of een van die wat gebruik word, kry. Dit werk almal min of meer dieselfde so dit sal goed wees as studente dit kan doen en die hele proses verstaan. Van besprekings maak tot bevestigings, “invoices”, ens. Hulle moet ook weet hoe om “e-mails” te stuur en “attachments” aan te heg.” (E10) *(It will be good to give the students exposure to Guest House Manager, or one of the systems used. They all work more or less the same so it will be good if students can do it and understand the process. From making reservations to confirmations, invoices, etc. They must also know how to send e-mails and attachments.)*

“Ons gebruik Nightsbridge vir besprekings. Dit sal baie goed wees as julle studente blootstelling daarvan kan kry. Hulle werk saam met Trip Advisor en Bookings.com – die heel effektiëste “booking site” in die wêreld. Hoe gouer iemand Nightsbridge kan werk hoe beter vir ons want akkommodasie is ons kern besigheid.” (E6) *(We use Nightsbridge for reservations. It will be very good if you can give students exposure to that. It works with Trip Advisor and Bookings.com – the most effective booking site in the world. The sooner someone can work Nightsbridge the better for us because accommodation is our core business.)*

“Die rekenaarsisteme in die restaurant en byvoorbeeld Opera by Front Office. Ek moet vir jou sê as iemand sou aansoek doen vir werk, m.a.w. as iemand verder wil gaan in die industrie is dit belangrik dat dit op hulle CV is. Enige van die sisteme sal werk en vir hulle baie help.” (E8) *(The computer systems in the restaurant and for example Opera at Front Office. I must tell you if someone applies for work, in other words someone wants to go further in the industry, it is important to be on their CV. Any of the systems will work and will help them a lot.)*

4.4.3 Attitudes

In this section, aspects that can be linked to the attitudes of students as identified by respondents are listed and discussed. The ideal disposition for a position in the tourism industry, the importance of punctuality, the ability to think for oneself, having common sense and being proactive are discussed. These topics are then compared with what is included in the national tourism curriculum.

4.4.3.1 Friendly, outgoing disposition is more suitable for a position in the tourism industry

Respondents made valuable comments with regards to the ideal personality for a position in the tourism industry. Mixed responses were received as listed in Table 4.13 and discussed thereafter. The topics related to personality as included in the national tourism curriculum are also listed.

Table 4.13: Data summary on suitable personality type

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
<p>-Outgoing personality that has good interpersonal skills more likely to 'fit' in the tourism industry although scope for other personality types as well.</p> <p>-Students must want to communicate with guests.</p>	<p>In Tourism Communication N4 the following topics are covered: successful human relations (motivation, personality, human emotions, self-esteem, perception, human relations skills, stress), etiquette (personal grooming, dress, suitable greetings, general etiquette and protocol, and telephone etiquette), inter-cultural communication.</p> <p>Tourism Communication N5 deals with enquiries, complaints and conflict (humane treatment, sexual harassment) and Presentation Communication (oral communication skills, listening skills, conversation, forms of address, informal speeches, presentations and public speaking, interviews).</p> <p>In Hotel Reception N6 one of the topics includes how to communicate with guests.</p>

There were mixed responses from respondents with regards to a specific type of personality more suited for a position in the tourism industry. From the responses below it is clear that there are many different opinions. Many types of positions are available in the industry that can cater for various types of personalities.

“Ek dink dis baie belangrik dat hulle die regte tipe persoonlikheid het – dit help nie iemand kan nie met die gaste gesels nie – so dit is nogals belangrik. ‘n Introvert gaan nie noodwendig hier werk nie – so persoon is dalk meer gemaklik om “data capturing” te doen. Ek glo daar is vir elkeen ‘n plekkie in die bedryf maar dalk nie vir almal om direk met gaste te werk nie. Dit sal ook nie vir die persoon lekker wees nie.” (E10) *(I think it is important that they have the right type of personality – it does not help if someone cannot talk to guests – it is very important. An introvert might not work here – such a person might feel more comfortable doing data capturing. I do believe there is a place for everyone in the industry but perhaps not working with guests directly. That person will also not enjoy it.)*

“Nee, ek dink die bedryf is wyd genoeg om almal te absorbeer. Ek dink ‘n introvert gaan jy in ‘n kantoor sit en sy gaan reisplanne optrek. ‘n Meer spontane persoon gaan jy gebruik om jou bemarking te doen en toergids werk ens. Daar is ‘n plekkie vir almal.” (L3) *(No, I think the industry is wide enough to absorb all types of personalities. I think an introvert you can put in an office to do travel plans. You would use a more spontaneous person to do your marketing and be a tour guide. There is a place for everybody.)*

Students should be made aware of the demands on front-line employees in terms of the amount of contact with guests. Various topics related to this aspect are covered in the national tourism curriculum. An important point to mention is that people working in tourism must want to communicate with guests.

“Jy het dalk nie aan die begin baie verantwoordelikheid nie, maar hulle moet selfvertroue hê, goed kan kommunikeer (verbaal en skriftelik) en besluite kan neem. Hulle behoort almal aan debatsverenigings deel te neem om te help met selfvertroue. Hulle moet wil kommunikeer met gaste.” (E5) *(You might not have a lot of responsibility in the beginning, but you must have self-confidence, you must be able to communicate well (verbally and written). They should all take part in debating societies to help them gain self-confidence. They must want to communicate with guests.)*

Many respondents had specific ideas with regards to the ideal personality suited to the industry.

“Persoonlikheid speel ‘n groot rol. Mens moet ‘n “people pleaser” wees en baie geduld hê vir hierdie bedryf. Ek dink tog mense kan ontwikkel en begin dalk as iemand wat stil en skaam is en later ontwikkel die persoon dalk met baie selfvertroue in ‘n “front office” posisie. Jy moet lekker voel om die werk te doen.” (E7) *(Personality plays a big part. You must be a people pleaser and have a lot of patience in this industry. I do think people can develop and may start off shy and quiet and later the person can develop with self-confidence into a front office position. You must feel good to do your job.)*

“Jy kan al die akademiese kennis hê maar nie noodwendig die regte profiel vir die bedryf nie. Dit is baie belangrik dat mens dit al op ‘n vroeër stadium van die kursus kan identifiseer. As die kinders inkom om ‘n bepaalde rigting binne die gasvryheidsindustrie te studeer, dan moet hulle gasvry wees. Dit is nie iets wat hulle akademies onder die knie gaan kry nie.” (E14) *(You can have all the academic knowledge but might not have the correct profile for the industry. It is very important to identify it at an early stage. If children come in to study for a specific sector within the hospitality industry, then they must be hospitable. It is not something that they can study.)*

“Ja beslis, mens hoef nou nie heeltemal “bubbly” te wees nie, maar dit help ook nie om skaam te wees nie en jy moet ook nie bang wees om jou sê te sê nie. Ek weet nie hoe om dit te verduidelik nie maar mense wat in die toerismebedryf werk is net anders – dis asof hulle meer “happy go lucky” is – meer geduld. Moeilik om te definieer.” (G1) *(Yes, one does not have to be totally bubbly, but it does not help to be shy or scared to share your opinion. I do not know how to explain it but people in the industry are just different – they are more happy go lucky – more patient. Difficult to define.)*

One lecturer, with many years of experience in the tourism industry, summarised the ideal personality as follows:

“Nommer een – jy moet lief wees vir mense. As jy nie lief is vir mense nie kan jy nie in die reisbedryf wees nie. Jy moet selfvertroue hê – dit gaan gebou word deur kennis of ervaring wat jy opdoen. Jy kan ‘n introvert in die reisbedryf wees, ek dink nie dit gaan daaroor nie. Ek dink dit is jou kennis wat jou selfvertroue gaan gee om te praat met mense. Ek dink ‘n mate van nuuskierigheid – as jy nie wil uitvind nie, wat gaan aan in hierdie plek, hoe lyk daai plek – daai belangstelling van wat in die wêreld aangaan moet daar wees. Daai dryfkrag moet daar wees en ek dink dit kan iemand ver neem in die bedryf.” (L2) *(Number one – you must love people. If you do not love people you cannot be in the travel industry. You must have self-confidence – it will be developed with knowledge and experience you gain. You can be an introvert in the travel industry – I do not think it is about that. I think it is your knowledge that will give you self-confidence to talk to people. I think it is being inquisitive – if you do not want to find out what is going on at a certain place, what that place looks like, interest in what is going on in the world. That drive must be there – I think it can take someone a long way in the industry.)*

A more outgoing type of personality combined with good interpersonal skills seems to be more suitable. Although the industry can accommodate many personality types within all the various sectors of tourism, it is important that students want to communicate with guests and understand what the industry entails before choosing a career in tourism.

Linked to this discussion is the suggestion that was made to interview prospective students before accepting them into the tourism programme.

Any student should understand exactly what the content of their chosen programme entails. Respondents suggested that the application process for the tourism programme should include interviewing prospective applicants. The aim will be to determine if they understand what the programme entails and if they exhibit the personality traits and interpersonal skills required for a career in tourism. It is debatable whether or not students should be accepted or

referred to another programme based on the results of an interview as many factors influence the performance of students during interviews.

Throughout this section many responses have been made with regards to personality types and specific requirements for people working in tourism. Perhaps during an interview or aptitude test one will be able to identify if a student possesses some or most of these requirements and advise students on possible career paths based on these results. An institution, in my opinion, in consultation with industry role-players, will have to determine the specific requirements they prefer in order for a student to qualify for admission to a programme:

“Ek dink ook as ons keuring doen moet ons kyk na die studente se algemene kennis, persoonlikhede ens. want party pas net nie in die kursus nie. Dit was dalk nie eers hulle keuse nie.” (L1) *(I think if we do selection we need to look at a student's general knowledge, personality, etc. because some of them do not fit into the programme. It might not have been their own choice.)*

4.4.3.2 Punctuality required

In Table 4.14 the responses with regards to punctuality of students in the work place are listed. The verbatim responses listed after the table indicates that students are relied upon in the workplace and must be on time. The comparison with the curriculum is also included in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Data summary on punctuality

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
-In most cases students are on time. -It is mentioned that students are trusted with great responsibility and if not on time it affects the whole operation. -Not something that can be taught, it depends on the student.	In Tourism Communication N4 etiquette (personal grooming, dress, suitable greetings, general etiquette and protocol, telephone etiquette), deportment, proper and correct behaviour is dealt with.

Employers stated that students are punctual most of the time. Each student is different and it depends on their personality:

“Studente is gewoonlik baie stiptelik, betroubaar en lyk baie professioneel.” (E5) *(Students are usually punctual, trustworthy and look professional.)*

“Studente is oor die algemeen stiptelik, maar ons het ook al ‘n student gehad wat gereeld laat gekom het. Ek dink dit hang van ‘n student se persoonlikheid af.” (E1) *(Students are usually punctual, but we have also had a student who arrived late regularly. I think it depends on the personality of the student.)*

In some cases, students displayed unprofessional behaviour by not arriving for work on time and it affects the operation of the establishment with, for example, the changing of shifts:

“Ek gee hulle ook verantwoordelikheid – byvoorbeeld die oopsluit van die hotel – en dit gebeur gereeld dat studente dan laat kom. Dit is belangrik dat hulle stiptelik moet wees.” (E7) *(I also give them responsibility – for example the opening of the hotel – and it happens often that students come late. It is important that they must be punctual.)*

Boland College aims to prepare students for employment by expecting them to be on time for classes, to hand assignments in on time and to apply effective time management.

4.4.3.3 Ability to think for oneself, having common sense and being pro-active is vital

Respondents indicated that students must be able to think for themselves, be pro-active and have ‘common sense’ as listed in Table 4.15. It seems that students wait for instructions as discussed in the section following the table. Some of these topics are covered in the national tourism curriculum as listed in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Data summary about ability to think for oneself, common sense and being pro-active

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
-Concern from many respondents that students cannot think for themselves, are not pro-active and do not have common sense. -Students must have the ability to solve problems and complaints. -Students are like school children. -Students must be inquisitive and ask questions.	In Tourism Communication N5 the following are dealt with: dealing with enquiries, complaints and conflict (humane treatment, sexual harassment). In Hotel Reception N6 how to communicate with guests are dealt with.

Employers mentioned the fact that students cannot think for themselves – it is often with simple tasks that they require guidance. There seems to be a general lack of common sense amongst students which is alarming:

“Studente het partykeer ook nie “common sense” nie: hoe om ‘n tuinslang te skuif, hoe om ‘n vuur aan te steek, tamaties in ‘n sakkie te pak by Checkers, hoe om vir ‘n gas tee te maak – algemene goedjies wat studente behoort te weet.” (E4) (*Students sometimes do not have common sense: how to move a garden hose, how to light a fire, how to pack tomatoes in a bag at Checkers, how to make tea for a guest – general things that a student should know.*)

“Sometimes it seems that their common sense and logic have disappeared. The younger generation is different – they are stimulated visually and it seems that basic manners and life skills and etiquette are not always taught to them by their parents. And that is sad. That is not something that a College can teach.” (E9)

Employers also expressed frustration with the fact that students are not pro-active and wait for instructions. Boland College aims to equip students with various skills. Assignments that require them to be pro-active (for example having to make appointments with tourism establishments to obtain information) and think for themselves (how they will approach a certain assignment) are included throughout the programme. Employers made the following responses that indicate their frustration with students that are not pro-active as well as why they require students to think for themselves:

“Leer asseblief vir die studente om nie te wag vir opdragte nie – wees meer pro-aktief. Hulle moet inisiatief neem: staan op en gaan help die dames in die kombuis. Ek sê ook vir studente moenie net sit

nie, kom vra vir my vir iets om te doen. Hulle moet ook besef dit maak 'n goeie indruk op die ander personeel as hulle sien die studente is nie bang vir werk nie. Doen net iets. Moet nie net daar sit nie. Studente moet moeite doen met die gaste en ekstra vriendelik wees – dit skep die atmosfeer in ons gastehuis.” (E4) *(Please teach the students not to wait for instructions – be more pro-active. They must take the initiative – stand up and go and help the ladies in the kitchen. I also tell the students not to just sit around, come and ask me for something to do. Just do something. Do not just sit there. Students must put in effort with guests and be extra friendly – it sets the atmosphere in our guest house.)*

“Ek dink die studente moet meer pro-aktief wees – hulle moet goed doen, inisiatief neem en nie net agteroor sit en wag vir goed om te gebeur nie. Ek dink ook die projekte wat hulle moet doen is goed – dit dwing hulle om in kontak te bly – mens moet sorg dat mens weet wat aangaan.” (E11) *(I think the students must be more pro-active – they must do things, take the initiative and not just sit and wait for things to happen. I think the projects that they have to do are good – they force them to stay in contact – one must ensure one knows what is going on.)*

Even graduates realised the importance of using their own initiative and showing employers that they can think for themselves:

“Ek is 'n mense-mens, ek werk goed saam met mense, ek kan instruksies goed volg ek kan ook my eie inisiatief gebruik. Boland Kollege het 'n deel daaraan gehad maar ek was nog altyd iemand wat my eie inisiatief gebruik het. Dit is die tipe mens wat ek nog altyd was, maar Boland Kollege het 'n aandeel daaraan gehad. Veral in die tipe take wat ons moes doen, jy moes self alles doen, jy was nie ge-“spoon feed” nie.” (G2) *(I am a people's person, I work well with people, and I can follow instructions well and can use my own initiative. Boland College had a part in that but I think I have always been someone that can use my own initiative. That is the type of person I have always been, but Boland College had a part in that. Especially in the types of assignments we had to do, you had to do everything yourself, you were not spoon fed.)*

“Ek was ywerig, bereid om hard te werk. Altyd bereid om te leer. Wat ek by die Kollege geleer het is om hard te werk, tyd te bestuur, ons is nie ge-“spoonfeed” nie. Van die mense wat saam met my werk wil net agteroor sit. Mens kan nie wag en sit vir iets om te gebeur nie, mens moet hard werk en gaan daarvoor.” (G6) *(I was eager and willing to work hard. Always willing to learn. What I learnt at the College was to work hard, manage my time, we were not spoon fed. Some of the people that work with me just want to sit around. You cannot sit and wait for something to happen; you must work hard for it.)*

4.4.3.4 Good work ethics is important

Some respondents indicated that students do not understand what acceptable behaviour in the workplace entails as listed in Table 4.16. Although ethics is discussed in the national tourism curriculum, as indicated in the table, the verbatim responses indicate that some students do not act appropriately in the workplace.

Table 4.16: Data summary on good work ethics

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
-Mixed responses from respondents with regards to the work ethics students display. -Mentioned that it is part of a person's upbringing. -Students need more exposure to learn what is acceptable behaviour in the workplace.	In Tourism Communication N4 etiquette (personal grooming, dress, suitable greetings, general etiquette and protocol, and telephone etiquette), deportment, proper and correct behaviour is dealt with.

Respondents mentioned the fact that some students do not display good work ethics. It was stated that good work ethics is part of a person's upbringing. It is discussed in the Tourism Communication N4 curriculum:

“Studente se houding is partykeer ‘n probleem – hulle lyk nie lus om iets te doen nie. Studente hou ook gereeld hulle selfone dop – dit is onprofessioneel.” (E4) *(The attitude of students is sometimes a problem – they do not look like they want to do something. Students spend a lot of time looking at their cellphones – that is unprofessional.)*

“Studente het nie goeie werksetiek nie. Hulle verstaan nie hulle moet onder begin nie. Hulle wil vroeg loop en is nie lus vir hard werk nie.” (E6) *(Students do not have good work ethics. They do not understand they have to start at the bottom. They want to go home early and do not want to work hard.)*

This discussion ties in with the previous discussion about the limited exposure some students have: exposure to the tourism industry, to travel and to life. They cannot see the bigger picture:

“Die grootste ding wat die studente moet besef is dat dit is ‘n baie verantwoordelike werk. Ek dink nie almal besef die verantwoordelikheid wat op hulle skouers is as hulle in die industrie begin werk nie. Hoe leer jy dit vir iemand? Kan seker vir hulle “scenarios” gee. Dit is nie iets wat ons vir hulle kan leer nie. Dit is iets wat jy in jou huis gaan leer. Dit is “grounded” dinge. Iemand het nou die dag gesê

mens het nie meer algemene kennis nodig nie want jy het Google. Dit is nie waar nie – dit werk nie so nie.” (L3) *(The biggest thing that the students must realise is that there is a lot of responsibility involved in a career in tourism. I do not think they realise the responsibility resting on their shoulders when they start working in the industry. How do you teach that to someone? You can perhaps give them scenarios. It is not something that you can teach them. It is something that you learn in your home. They are fundamental things. Somebody said the other day that you do not need general knowledge anymore because you can Google. It is not true –it does not work like that.)*

4.4.3.5 Good self-confidence is advantageous

Respondents indicated during the interviews that some students have self-confidence while others struggle as indicated in Table 4.17. Although the topic is included in the national tourism curriculum, as listed in Table 4.17, some students apparently need to build their confidence in the workplace.

Table 4.17: Data summary on self-confidence

Data from interviews	Comparison with curriculum
-Will develop as person becomes more comfortable in a position. -Will assist when dealing with guests. -Some students display good self-confidence, and some not.	In Tourism Communication N4 successful human relations (motivation, personality, human emotions, self-esteem, perception, human relations skills, stress) is dealt with. . In Tourism Communication N5 presentation communication (oral communication skills, listening skills, conversation, forms of address, informal speeches, presentations and public speaking) is dealt with.

Respondents stated that some students seem to display excellent self-confidence in the working environment while others seem unsure. This is perhaps related to inexperience rather than a problem with self-confidence as discussed earlier. As a person becomes more confident in their working environment, they will gain self-confidence. These topics are discussed in the Tourism Communication N4 curriculum. Some employers indicated students seem to have good self-confidence while other students seems to struggle with confidence in the workplace:

“Ek dink die studente het baie selfvertroue – hulle is nie bang om nuwe dinge aan te pak nie. Veral as hulle vars uit die Kollege uitkom. Ek kry die idee julle “cover” wat belangrik is, so hulle is nie baie “overwhelmed” as hulle hier aankom nie.” (E2) *(I think the students have lots of self-confidence – they are not scared to take on new things. Especially if they come out of the College. I get the idea you cover what is important, so they are not overwhelmed when they get here.)*

“Meeste van die studente wat hier kom van Boland Kollege lyk maar skaam. Ek weet nie of hulle geleer word dat hulle “self-confidence” moet hê wanneer hulle met gaste praat nie. Hoe om situasies te hanteer. Veral as ons hulle vergelyk teenoor studente van die Private Hotel School – wat hier instap, hulle kom “shadow” maar hulle spring dadelik in terwyl die Boland Kollege studente sal terugstaan en wag vir opdragte.” (E8) *(Most of the students from Boland College look shy. I do not know if they are taught that they must have self-confidence when they talk to guests. How to handle situations. Especially if you compare it with students from the Private Hotel School – they walk in here, they jump in immediately while the Boland College students stand and wait for instructions.)*

4.4.4 General responses

Below are some additional or general responses generated from interviews and may be discussed separately. The number of respondents referring to these issues justifies an individual discussion of these points.

4.4.4.1 Update the curriculum and textbooks

All lecturers that were interviewed expressed concern with regards to the syllabi and textbooks that are not in line with current industry trends and developments (some of which have been discussed during this study). Some of the graduates that were interviewed had the same concerns. As example, the response from one respondent was as follows:

“Mens moet ook kyk na die handboeke – dat dit “up to date” is. En die sillabusse – die goed in die industrie verander so vinnig. Die handboeke word ge-“update” maar die sillabus nie. Daar word hopelik na die sillabus gekyk. Die sillabus kan nie langer as 3 jaar staan nie – en die handboeke moet aangepas word.” (L1) *(One must also look at the textbooks – that they are up to date. And the syllabi – things in the industry change so quickly. The textbooks are updated but the syllabi not. Hopefully they are looking at the syllabi. The syllabi cannot stay the same for longer than three years – and the textbooks must be adapted.)*

4.4.4.2 Expand the programme to two years and include additional courses

This discussion ties in with the previous discussions in this chapter about adding modules to the national tourism curriculum. It has been suggested by respondents that the programme must be expanded to at least two years to possibly incorporate some of the suggestions made by respondents.

In the past, Boland College added an advanced certificate (unofficially known as N7) to the national tourism curriculum (N4 – N6 certificates) and offered it as a two year programme incorporating the following modules:

- Advanced Computers (E-mail, Internet, Access)
- Advanced Destinations
- Eco Tourism
- Entrepreneurship / Tour Operating
- Event Management
- Fares and Ticketing (Advanced)
- Fidelio
- First Aid
- German or French
- Guest House Management
- Labour Law
- Wine Course

Graduates and lecturers referred to this certificate programme during the interviews. Boland College no longer offers the N7 programme due to funding restrictions as mentioned

previously. Lecturers and graduates were asked their opinion about the N7 modules and the value to students who need to find employment in a very competitive labour market. These were some of their responses:

“Ons kort baie meer as net hierdie 4 vakke wat ons tans aanbied per semester. Hulle moet verder kan gaan – hulle kort bietjie Entrepreneurskap, bietjie van alles moet hulle by doen. Ek voel ons is nou so rigied in een rigting en ek dink daar buite in die mark is daar baie studente wat meer het as ons studente. Ons studente het ‘n agterstand – hulle staan agter in die tou want hulle het nie dit wat die ander het nie.” (L1) *(We need a lot more than the four core subjects that we currently offering per semester. They must be able to go further – they need some Entrepreneurship training, a bit of everything. I feel we are so rigid in one area and there are students that have a lot more than our students. Our students are at a disadvantage – they stand at the back of the line.)*

The importance of adding an additional language to the programme was also mentioned:

“Students must be bilingual - some of them struggle. If you have a third language, even better. The guest experience is just so much better if students can assist for example a guest that speaks German, in German.” (E9)

“Ek dis baie belangrik om ‘n taal deel van die kursus te maak – meeste van ons toeriste is van Duitsland of Nederland. So dit sal baie help om Duits te doen.” (G8) *(I think it is important to make a language part of the course – most of our tourists are from Germany or the Netherlands. So it will help a lot to do German.)*

For Tour Guides a formal qualification plus registration with the relevant authority (e.g. Western Cape Government) and Professional Drivers Permit is required:

“Die probleem is dat die studente nie PDP’s en of Toergids kwalifikasies het nie – dus kan ons hulle nie gebruik nie. Ons benodig mense wat gekwalifiseerd is en julle studente het nie daardie kwalifikasies wat ons benodig nie. Dit beperk hulle nogal. Waar gebruik ek hulle? Dit sou vir ons baie help as die ouens al meer prakties opgelei is sodat hulle kan begin werk. In my veld kan hulle nie begin werk nie want hulle het nog nie die kwalifikasies nie.” (E15) *(The problem is that students do not have a PDP or a Tour Guide qualification – we cannot use them. We need people that are qualified and your students do not have the qualifications we need. That restricts them. How do I use them? It will help us a lot if students have been trained more in practice so that they can start working. In my field they cannot start working unless they are qualified.)*

Event Management is usually a very popular module amongst students and many students want to work in the events sector. One tourism graduate phrased it as follows:

“Ja beslis, toe ek gaan prakties doen het in die hotel het die General Manager gesien ek wil werk. Toe ek in die “Events” departement was is ek nooit weer daar uit nie. Baie goed wat ek geleer het, het gehelp. Die beplannings ens. van events. Dit het my baie gehelp.” (G6) *(Yes definitely, when I went to do my practical the General Manager at the hotel saw that I wanted to work. When I went into the Events department, I never left. Many things that I learnt helped. The planning etc. of events. It helped me a lot.)*

Even the subject Labour Law, which students usually find boring seems to have a place in the programme. The same graduate emphasised:

“Arbeidsreg ja, die agtergrond het gehelp om myself te verdedig. Die werkgewers vat kanse want hulle dink jy weet nie wat aangaan nie. So om daai goed te weet is baie belangrik.” (G6) *(Labour Law yes, the background helped me to defend myself. The employers take chances because they think you do not know what is going on. So to know that type of thing is important.)*

To summarise, many respondents stated that the core national tourism curriculum (National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism) is not sufficient to equip students appropriately for employment. Additional courses will assist students in finding employment, as reiterated by one employer:

“Ek dink dit is baie belangrik om studente te help om ‘n rigting te kies, m.a.w. te spesialiseer. As dinge so wyd is, is dit baie moeilik. Mens moet hulle help. Ek het ‘n probleem met kursusse wat so wyd is. Hulle moet aan die einde van die kursus ge-“channel” word. As hulle die 18 maande kursus voltooi het en ‘n reisagent wil wees – doen Galileo. As hulle ‘n toergids wil wees, ‘n toergidskursus. Indien hulle ‘n bestuurder wil word in ‘n toerismeplek, doen ‘n bestuurskursus. Indien hulle ‘n entrepreneur wil word, ‘n kwalifikasie daarin. Hulle kan dus aan die einde van hulle kursus spesialiseer. Jy begin breed maar dan spesialiseer jy. Jy is gekwalifiseer maar in wat ... so as mens hulle kan help in ‘n rigting sal dit great wees.” (E15) *(I think it is very important to help students to choose an area of specialisation in tourism. If there are so many options, it is difficult. One has to help them. I have a problem with courses that are so wide. They must be channeled at the end of the programme. When they have completed the 18 month course and want to be a travel agent, a Galileo course. If they want to become a manager of a tourism establishment, do a management course. If they want to be an entrepreneur, a*

qualification in that. They can specialise at the end of their course. You start wide but then you specialise. You are qualified, but in what? So one can assist them to choose an area to specialise in.)

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter contains the findings of this study. The issues identified by respondents during interviews were grouped under the categories: knowledge, skills and attitudes. The issues were compared with what is included in the national tourism curriculum and verbatim responses used to illustrate important issues under each section. In conclusion, the findings linked to the different categories as utilised in this chapter are summarised in the next paragraphs.

Firstly, it seems clear from the findings of this study that additional knowledge, apart from what is currently included in the national tourism curriculum, is required by students before embarking on a career in the tourism industry. Sector specific knowledge is essential in order to make students more employable. Students must be able to apply the knowledge learnt in different practical environments, in other words in different establishments in the tourism industry.

Secondly, respondents have indicated clearly that students have too limited exposure to travel and this might have implications for their performance when starting a career in the tourism industry. Respondents also indicated that students need general life skills, including good communication skills. A key issue highlighted by respondents was the importance of computer skills as well as sector specific computer training. The current national tourism curriculum does not include any computer skills training.

Thirdly, various respondents commented on the ideal type of personality or disposition suited for a position in the tourism industry. It seems that a friendly, outgoing type of person is

more suitable. Respondents, especially employers, indicated that students must be able to think for themselves, have common sense and be pro-active. The findings indicated that some employers are frustrated with the fact that students lack initiative and wait for instructions. Good work ethics and the importance of punctuality were also identified by respondents as aspects that seem vital in the tourism industry.

Two issues that also emerged from the general responses were the need to update the curriculum in terms of duration as well as the need to improve the relevance of textbooks. The suggestion to expand the national tourism curriculum to two years by including additional modules was a recurrent theme and to update textbooks seems to be imperative. In the next chapter the conclusions and implications of this study will be discussed.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications

In Chapter 4 respondent data were analysed and findings were discussed. In this chapter the conclusions and possible implications of this study will be highlighted.

This study aimed to answer the following research question: *In which respects are the current national tourism curriculum aligned, or not aligned, with needs of the local tourism industry in Stellenbosch?* What follow illustrate that this question was answered and supported by the findings of the study.

5.1 Conclusions

The conclusions of this study are based on the literature findings discussed in Chapter 2 of this study as well as the empirical findings of the research as reported in Chapter 4. Overall, I have aimed for this study to have some potential impact on curriculum practices at Boland College and possibly at other similar institutions. Such implications will be indicated towards the end of this chapter.

Curriculum renewal seems to be an increasingly important issue. The Minister of Higher Education and Training recently stated that the quality and relevance of courses at FET colleges need urgent attention (Six Principles of Change, 2012). He was referring to the DHET's Turnaround Strategy for FET colleges which aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning at FET colleges. Perhaps the results of this study can provide some direction with regards to the renewal of the national tourism curriculum as it seems to be an urgent priority.

As far as the tourism industry is concerned, the Travel and Tourism Chamber compiled a strategic plan for 2011 – 2016 in line with the new developments in the SETA landscape, National Skills Development Strategy 3 for 2011 to 2016 and the Sector Skills Plan 2011 to 2016 (Chamber Guide Tourism and Travel Services, 2010). Some of the key performance indicators listed in this plan include offering programmes to meet industry needs by reviewing N-courses, making the plan available to employers and building the capacity of FET colleges to offer vocational courses and work experience for college learners (Chamber Guide Tourism and Travel Services, 2010). From these statements it is clear that all stakeholders believe the time for curriculum renewal at FET colleges has come. The results of this study confirm that such curriculum renewal may also be applicable to the national tourism curriculum.

5.1.1 Static curricula vs. a fast-changing tourism industry

In my study the question was raised how Boland College can equip graduates with the necessary skills and knowledge if the national tourism curriculum is outdated (see paragraph 2.1.3). From the findings in this study it became clear that students do not leave Boland College ready for work in the tourism industry after completing the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism. The main challenge at entry levels is an apparent lack of preparedness (also see Chamber Guide Tourism and Travel Services, 2010). It also became clear that various tourism sectors exist within which students can specialise. These tourism sectors are listed in the first column of Table 5.1. It was suggested by participants in this study that students complete the 18 month tourism programme (national tourism curriculum) and then choose in which sector of the industry they would like to further their careers so that they are better equipped for employment. Students may then complete an additional, six month module in their chosen field of specialisation which can be incorporated into the national tourism

curriculum. Possible additional modules as identified by the findings of this study are listed in the second column of Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Possible additional modules required by students after completing N4 – N6

Chosen tourism sector to work in:	Additional module(s) suggested by respondents:
Travel (Travel Agent)	Galileo, Amadeus or similar
Travel (Tour Guide)	Eco Tourism course, Tour Guide qualification and PDP
Various sectors as manager	Course in Business Management
Various sectors starting own business	Course in Entrepreneurship
Wine industry (Tasting room)	Cape Wine Academy course or similar
Accommodation (various positions)	Guest House Management course and sector specific software training for example Nightsbridge, Semper or similar.
Event management / co-ordination	Event management course
Most sectors	Course in Marketing
Most sectors	Third Language for example German or French
Most sectors	Course in Labour Law – understanding basic concepts with regards to employment contracts and rights.
All sectors	MS Office Computer Training

(Source: Respondent data in this study. See Chapter 4.)

This suggestion strongly link to new global demands that the education and training offered by higher education institutions inevitably have to become more responsive to the needs and expectations of industry, the state and of society in order to enhance economic and social prosperity (also see Kruss, 2004). It becomes clear that Boland College may not ignore the needs of the industry role-players in Stellenbosch as students can no longer enter employment unprepared.

5.1.2 An engaged curriculum

Various definitions for the term ‘curriculum’ were discussed in Chapter 2 (see paragraph 2.1.3). Barnett and Coate’s (2005) definition of the engaged curriculum resonates with this study as it involves the total development of students. The term ‘partnership curriculum’ is

also relevant to this study as it confirms the importance of involving industry role-players in curriculum planning and renewal (Kelly, 2004). By implementing 'partnership curricula' colleges may ensure that the tourism industry is not only providing input into the national tourism curriculum but that the tourism industry can also provide FET colleges with more opportunities for practical training (Tesone and Ricci, 2005). This could be an ongoing partnership that aims to update curricula regularly for students to be empowered and equipped to face employment. A possible topic for further discussion with the Department of Higher Education and Training is thus how to establish a partnership curriculum; in other words, how to establish a forum to ensure discussions between FET colleges and industry role-players on a continuous basis.

In order to ensure that students truly experience an engaged curriculum, FET colleges will have to formalise the practical training that students must complete during their studies so that they can apply theory learnt in practice in a formal component of the national tourism curriculum (also see Akoojee, 2009). From the findings in this study it became clear that systems and procedures often work differently in practice to what is taught in theory as they are specific to each establishment, suiting the requirements of the specific institution (see Chapter 4 in particular). A more formalised work-integrated learning component can possibly assist students to be better equipped for the workplace and Boland College can ensure in particular that key skills necessary for success in the workplace are embedded in the curricula (Crawford, 2013).

Other institutions, such as universities of technology, offering tourism programmes require students to complete work-integrated learning as a formalised process included in the curriculum as a subject. Upon completion of practical learning experiences students must

submit a portfolio of evidence. However, in the FET sector, the work-integrated learning component is not a properly formalized and structured process. It seems increasingly important that FET colleges compare themselves to work-integrated learning practices of other institutions to determine the advantages and disadvantages of such models and find the most suitable model for our context before adding it into the national tourism curriculum (also see Collins, 2007).

From the findings of this study as reported in Chapter 4, mixed opinions were expressed about the value of practical training during the 18 months students are on campus. Issues raised included the fact that students usually obtain very little ‘real’ exposure during the few days they are at a tourist establishment. The findings showed that employers need clearer guidelines with regards to the expectations of Boland College when they accept students to complete their practical training. Employers, graduates and lecturers were all in favour of longer periods of practical training. Work-based learning has become an essential core element of FET college provision and the time has probably come for Boland College to develop a work-integrated learning component that may better benefit students and employers (also see Gamble, 2003). Explaining to employers how work-integrated learning will tie to the national tourism curriculum, contribute to student development and be assessed at the workplace are all issues that Boland College will have to discuss with relevant stakeholders (also see Cecil, 2012).

As stated in Chapter 4, once candidates obtain the National Certificates N4 – N6 in Tourism issued by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) they can further their education by completing 18 months of practical training in a tourism-related business. The motivation is to close the gap between the theoretical knowledge obtained and the application

of it in practice (also see Ruhanen, 2005). It seems clear from the findings in this study that this component may well be incorporated into the national tourism curriculum as a compulsory subject that students have to complete. Students should not be able to graduate until they have completed such a practical component.

5.1.3 Lack of life skills and limited exposure to travel

The importance of creating Mode 1 and Mode 2 type knowledge in FET colleges to enhance our student employability was discussed earlier (see paragraphs 2.1.4 and 2.2.8; also see Gibbons, 1994). Currently it seems as if the national tourism curriculum mainly focuses on creating Mode 1 type knowledge – that is mainly theoretical knowledge. Employability skills, i.e. knowledge application and relevant skills, do not currently seem to feature sufficiently in the learning of FET tourism students and will probably have to be more readily included throughout the national tourism curriculum (also see Dhiman, 2012). A relook at the national tourism curriculum in this respect seems inevitable.

Further to this discussion findings from employer data indicated that students ‘cannot think for themselves’ – it is often with simple tasks that they require guidance. There seems to be a general lack of ‘common sense’ amongst students, something which is most alarming. Employers also expressed frustration with the fact that students are not pro-active and constantly wait for instructions. It was also highlighted earlier (see paragraph 4.4.2.2) that there might be a need to include general life skills, also referred to as ‘graduate attributes’, in the national tourism curriculum (also see Gewer, 2000; Bailey, 1990; The National Qualifications Framework and Curriculum Development, 2000). Kruss (2004) stated that the life skills formerly developed through work experiences are now expected to be an integral

part of higher education programmes and curricula. This is currently not the case for the national tourism curriculum.

Another concern raised by most respondents in the findings is the fact that students have limited exposure to the tourism industry (see paragraph 4.4.2.2). How can students truly engage with a curriculum if they have never been exposed to travel or have limited life exposure? Within a diverse student population such exposure may be a challenge, as each student will have a different level of exposure based on their past experiences. In addition to this, within the financial and time constraints of any institution it may be questionable whether it is possible to provide all students with sufficient exposure.

Another skill that employers and lecturers are concerned about is communication (see paragraph 4.4.2.1). In the reported findings (see section 4.4.2.1) several respondents referred to the fact that students struggle with written communication and spelling. From the document analysis of the national tourism curriculum it became clear that teaching students appropriate vocabulary is not included in the curriculum. The focus seems rather to be on preparing students for employment. This issue might need to be addressed in the national tourism curriculum as the fact that students cannot communicate effectively (verbally and in writing) will have an impact on their work performance.

5.1.4 Regular review of curricula

The regular analysis and review of the tourism curriculum was discussed earlier with particular reference to the importance of obtaining feedback from graduates in order to improve the programme (see paragraphs 2.1.7 and 2.2.5; also see McCuddy, Pinar and Gingerich, 2008). All lecturers that were interviewed expressed concern with regards to the

syllabi and textbooks that are not in line with current industry trends and developments (see paragraph 4.4.4.1). Some of the graduates who were interviewed had the same concerns. It may be hugely important that the FET sector incorporate the notion of a partnership curriculum as was stated earlier by involving industry role-players in regular curriculum review processes to ensure that current industry trends and developments are incorporated in the national tourism curriculum and textbooks (also see Bailey, 1990).

5.1.5 Summary of conclusions

Findings from this study indicated that the current national tourism curriculum should be reviewed urgently and regularly (see paragraphs 2.1.7 and 2.2.5). Additional modules may also need to be added to the curriculum in order to allow students to specialise in particular sectors of the tourism industry (see Table 5.1). It was also suggested that the theoretical component of the tourism programme should be expanded to two years. By such an expansion Boland College may ensure students obtain as much exposure as possible to the tourism industry by means of learning activities such as educational visits, guest speakers and networking opportunities. Upon completion of the theoretical component, students may embark on a formalised work-integrated learning programme with specific outcomes as established by the institution in partnership with industry role-players. As has been stated by some authors (Beggs, Ross and Goodwin, 2008:32), formalised work-integrated learning programmes may provide the opportunity and the learning landscape for students to experience, first hand, professional practice activities which directly relate to the application of knowledge. It would be preferable for students to only be allowed to graduate once all of the above have been completed.

5.2 Implications

The results of a study usually have conceptual, practical or further research implications. Such implications are discussed next.

5.2.1 Conceptual implications

After completing this study my understanding of the term curriculum has changed drastically. As discussed in this study report, the engaged curriculum, partnership curriculum and workplace curriculum have become concepts that I would like to develop and apply at my own college and specifically within the tourism department at Boland College. It is clear that a curriculum is more than just a syllabus. If I want to ensure that my students in tourism graduate from Boland College ready to contribute to the tourism industry with applicable skills, knowledge and attitudes, I have to ensure that the institution makes use of the partnerships established with industry role-players. A workplace curriculum will also have to be established in relation to the needs of industry role-players to ensure that students obtain relevant and valuable experiences in the tourism industry before they graduate.

5.2.2 Practical implications

This study highlighted the differences between the national tourism curriculum currently offered and what the tourism industry requires from entry-level employees in terms of their knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is clear that further consideration should be given by the Department of Higher Education and Training with regards to what exactly a national tourism curriculum should entail.

Earlier in this chapter findings from the data generated from industry role-players were highlighted to indicate what could possibly be added to the tourism curriculum to enhance

possibilities for students to be better equipped to start employment. Adding additional modules to a national tourism curriculum could possibly make a significant difference in the quality and employability of graduates in the tourism industry.

The Department of Higher Education and Training may also consult The Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI) as they aim to provide vision, knowledge and a framework for tourism education programmes that ensure employability of students. By consulting with international organisations the DHET can ensure that the national tourism curriculum offered at FET colleges provides tourism education that ensures quality graduates with relevant knowledge and skills for tomorrow's tourism industry (also see Sheldon, Fesenmaier and Tribe, 2011).

5.2.3 Further research implications

What became clear from this study is that it may be duplicated in other geographical areas of South Africa to establish whether similar findings are prevalent. Should this be the case, such evidence can be shared with the Department of Higher Education and Training for consideration. Such evidence may perhaps be the starting point towards the renewal of the national tourism curriculum.

As mentioned earlier in this study, the Council for Trade and Occupation, in partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training, has agreed to jointly facilitate the process of updating portions of the curriculum of certain subjects within the NATED Report 191 programmes – unfortunately this involved only one subject of the national tourism curriculum namely Travel Office Procedures N4. It has been indicated how important it is to take note of the needs of employers and to avoid short-term curriculum responses that may not address the

needs of the tourism industry (also see Gamble 2003). The Department of Education should understand clearly that there is no quick fix and that updating the syllabus of one subject in isolation, which seems to be a dangerous way forward.

5.3 Final Conclusion

I agree with Dhiman (2012) who stated that the content of a tourism curriculum should change constantly to keep pace with the tourism industry. This is clearly not the case for the national tourism curricula currently in use at FET colleges. As this study has clearly pointed out, some tourism graduates of Boland College do not meet the needs required by the industry from entry-level employees.

It should also be noted that academics at FET colleges cannot be expected to keep teaching and administration on track and simultaneously engage in substantial curriculum reform and development work. Such activities and efforts take time and resources (Curriculum Reform: Issues and Problems, 2000). The Department of Higher Education and Training should take this into consideration when deciding the way forward for curriculum renewal as curriculum development efforts should be familiar, common and ongoing activities amongst educators (see, in particular, Collins, 2007). This is unfortunately not the case at FET colleges.

Finally, it may be said that curriculum development can take on many forms, but, in essence, is the process by which the pieces (courses) are fit together to increase the possibility that educated and trained individuals, graduating after a prescribed time, have the necessary knowledge foundation and experience to go on to a meaningful and productive life. I am of the opinion that this study has made some contribution to present evidence that the Department of Higher Education and Training should revisit their thinking about the national

tourism curriculum currently offered at FET colleges. Perhaps the way forward is to develop a basic national tourism curriculum that can be enhanced with an additional component based on the needs of the local tourism industry that each FET college serves.

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Addendum A: Interview questions

The interview consisted of three open-ended questions listed below. The prompts below were used to facilitate the process.

1. Which strong points have you observed in the training of students from Boland College?

Prompts: communication skills, knowledge about attractions in Stellenbosch, punctuality

2. Which gaps have you observed in the training of students from Boland College?

Prompts: computer skills, terminology used in tourism, self-confidence

3. How do you suggest Boland College should address these gaps?

Prompts: changes to training

Addendum B: Example of Transcribed Interview

EXAMPLE OF TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW DATA AS GENERATED FROM ONE RESPONDENT (AN EMPLOYER)

Respondent: E9

1. What are the strong points that you have observed in the education and training of the students from Boland College?

I think for most students entering employment the challenge is to apply the work that they have studied in textbooks in the workplace. They understand the context better if they actually experience it in real life. Once students start working at a hotel they learn the systems and procedures of the hotel. When, for example, handling complaints, students must be able to understand what the things they can control and handle are and when to refer it to a manager. And then, when they do refer the complaint, to learn from the manager in how to handle the complaint. So that next time, they know what to do.

2. What are the gaps in the training of the students from Boland College?

Students must be bilingual- some of them struggle. If you have a third language, even better. The guest experience is just so much better if students can assist, for example, a guest that speaks German, in German. Many of the things they cannot learn in a class however, I think it only comes from experience in the industry and being in the actual situations. Students do not ask questions; ask if you want to know how something works. They must be inquisitive if they want to learn.

- 3. Should students complete their N4 certificate, then work for six months, and then complete their N5 certificate, then work, etc. Or rather complete their studies and then start working?**

I think it will be very valuable for students to be exposed to the industry more. If they go back into the classroom, they then have knowledge of how it works in the industry and they can then apply that knowledge with what is happening in the classroom. It will give them a better understanding of what lecturers are talking about. Students should also understand that they are not going to start as managers. They have to work to get to that position, you start at the bottom. They seem to have this misconception that they start as managers. They also must want to work – you cannot just sit around. You must be willing to put in the hours – this is a 24/7 job. They must also be able to deal with many stressful situations. This will be the environment that they work in – tourists are demanding, it can be tough.

- 4. Do you think it is important to include management and marketing training in a tourism course?**

Absolutely – to understand the background. But students need to understand a management position is earned. You have to work in housekeeping cleaning rooms to better understand what it is all about. You cannot walk in and expect to manage. Manage what? It is earned. You have to understand the whole process – from when the tourist decides to phone your hotel to make the booking, the whole flow of the business and there are many sales aspects involved which is also an important skill to learn. You have to earn the respect from staff before you can manage.

5. How many of these aspects can actually be taught in a classroom.

It is very difficult. I suppose involving the students more in the industry is a good idea. Inviting guest speakers from the industry – the hotels – to come and talk about the reality of the industry. I have made new staff sit with me while phoning a hotel to make a reservation. They learn so much because they hear how people answer the phone and deal with guests. Telephone etiquette is vital in a hotel – what you first say to a guest. It sets the stage for the future interaction with the guest.

6. In terms of their communication skills – do they perform well?

Some of them yes, but the Mxit language is a problem. Proper full sentences, full stops, nouns, etc. Students cannot talk or write to guests in that manner – and they need to understand the difference. Sometimes it seems that their common sense and logic has disappeared. The younger generation is different – they are stimulated visually and it seems that basic manners and life skills and etiquette are not always taught to them by their parents. And that is sad. That is not something that a College can teach.

7. Any suggestions to overcome the gaps in training?

It is vital that students receive Opera training. When I look at a CV and a student has no experience on Opera – it is difficult to appoint that person. Yes, I can teach someone, but that takes valuable time out of the office. So that will definitely be to their advantage. I also look at experience in a similar position – so even if they have done practical work it helps. They must get as much exposure as possible. Any student must be able to think on their feet and multi-task. It is vital at a reception desk to be able to handle many things at the same time. They must also look the part – be presentable – these are all things that I look for during an interview.

8. What does your in-house training consist of?

They get exposure to all aspects of the hotel and must work shifts in housekeeping before they start at reception. They must understand how it all comes together to be able to function properly in a hotel. We will train them on the systems of the hotel, how we do things, reservations etc. and then they will work a couple of shifts with someone else before they start working on their own.

9. Any other comments?

I think roll-plays can help – simulating the real world can help. Giving them exposure to complaints, check-in's, etc. They must also be able to deal with criticism – when they receive feedback in the workplace about their performance, they must be able to understand that the purpose is to help them learn. Small things like how to send a proper e-mail, working with money, invoices, cashing-up – that can also be taught. Students must also be able to work a manual system should technology fail us – manual reservations, etc.

Addendum C



Addendum C		Knowledge						Language & numeracy				General skills & abilities, behaviour									Practical training & experience				Additions		
Aspects identified	+	+	-	+		-	+	+	-	+	+		+	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-
Respondents & sector	Sector specific knowledge good?	Syllabus/training sufficient	Have sector specific software training?	Good general computer skills	Company do in-house training?	Require experience/qualification for full time position?	Good communication skills / client relations	Good language skills	Can students spell?	Good numeric abilities	Sufficient life exposure / skills	Good telephone etiquette	Is there a specific type of personality for tourism?	Punctual / Friendly	Good self-confidence	Dress / act appropriately	Have common sense/ think for themselves?	Offer excellent guest service	Good work ethics? Hardworking?	Have positive attitude?	Finish studies then work (practical)	Is short-term practical useful?	Enough exposure to industry? / Ability to apply knowledge	Add. training required	Marketing training req?	Management training req?	
E1: Travel Agency	Y*		N	Y	Y			Y	N					P*	Y		N		Y / H	N	Y	N	N*	Y*			
E2: Travel Agency	Y*	Y	N	N	Y	Y						Y	Y		Y						Y	N	N	Y*			
G1: Travel Agency	N*	Y*	N	R		N	Y						Y*				S				N*			Y*			
G3: Travel Agency	Y		N		Y*		Y								Y						N*		R	N*	N	Y	
L1: Travel Agency		N*	N*	N*			N	R	N		N	R	Y		R*	N	R		R*	R	N	Y	N*	Y*	Y		
L2: Travel Agency	Y	N*	R	N			Y / R		N		N		Y								N*		N		Y	Y*	
E4: Guest House			N*	Y	Y		Y	N	N					F / R		N	N*			N				Y*			
E5: Guest House		N*	N*	R	Y		R	N		R*	N				N*		N	N*				N*	N*	Y*	Y	R*	
E6: Guest House		N*	N	Y	Y		R	N	N		R	R		P / P		Y	R		N				N*	Y*		Y	
E10: Guest House		N*	R*	Y	Y			R					Y			Y	R					N*	N*	Y*	Y	Y*	
G8: Guest House		Y	N*	R			Y*						Y*								N	N		Y*	Y	Y	
E7: Hotel			N*	Y	Y		Y	N	N			Y	Y*	N / R			N*	R	N		Y	N		Y*		Y	
E8: Hotel		N*	N		Y	Y		N			N*	N	Y*		N		N*				Y	N*	R*	Y*	Y*	Y	
E9: Hotel			N*	R*	Y	Y*	Some	N	N							R	N*				N*		N*	Y*	Y	Y	
E11: Wine farm	R	N*				R*	Y*	N	N		N		N	R*		R*	N		Y		Y		N*	Y*	Y	Y*	
E12: Wine farm	Y*	N*			Y	Y	Y						N	P		Y					N	3 months	R	Y*	Y	Y	
G6: Wine Farm	Y		N / R	R									Y*				Y / R		Y*		N		N*	Y*	Y	Y	
G7: Wine Farm	Y*		N*	N			R						R*									Y	N*	Y*	Y	Y	
E3: Accommodation Wholesaler	Y/R*			R*	Y	Y*		N	N	R	N	N	N			Y					Y		N	Y*	Y	Y	
G4: Accommodation Wholesaler	N*	Y*	N*	N																	N*	Y*	N*		Y	Y	
E13: Museum	N			Y	Y		Y							Y		N											
G5: Museum				R			Y										Y						R	Y*			
E14: Info office							Y				S*		Y*		S		S				N	Y*	S*	Y*			
G2: Info Office		N*		R			Y*					R			Y*		Y	R			N		N				
E15: Tour Operator (Adventure)	N*	N*				Y	Y														Y*	N	N	Y*	Y*	Y	
L3: Tour Operator		N*	N	R*			N	N*			N*		N*								N*		N*	Y*	Y	Y*	
L5: Event Management		N*		Some			Y				N*					Y			Y*		N*	N*	N*	Y*	Y	Some*	
L4: Other	Some	N*					R						Y*		R	R	R		R*		N*		N*	Y*	Y	Some*	
L6: Other		N*		Y			Some	Y													Y	Y		Y*	Y	Y	
E = Employers & sector			Y = Yes					Strong points = +							P = Punctual		H = hard-working										
G = Graduates & sector working in			N = No					Gaps = -							F= Friendly												
L = Lecturers & sector from			R = Required					* = See comments																			

Addendum D: National Tourism Curriculum

Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Tourist Destinations N4	Map work; South Africa as a tourist destination; Major attractions and tourist information of the provinces of South Africa; Lesotho and Swaziland as tourist destinations.	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 50%.
Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Travel Services N4	The travel industry (terminology, components, governing and other tourism bodies, functions of a travel agent.). Passenger services – point of entry/departure (airport facilities, in-flight facilities, baggage requirements, check-in procedures, customs regulations and transiting passengers). Travel documents (passports, visas, permits, health documents and documentation). Reservations (city / airport codes, travel manuals, fare quotations, general rules on reservations, how to make reservations, complete vouchers for hotels, tours, Greyhound and MPD's.). Tour planning & budgeting (types of tours, tour planning, compilation of brochures, client profiles).	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 60%.
Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Travel Office Procedures N4	Office administration: location and design of a travel office, ideal office, organisation structure, mail, filing, banking, security, insurance and copying documents. Marketing: concepts, consumer behaviour, marketing mix and sales techniques.	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 50%.

Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Tourism Communication N4	The communication process (barriers, interpersonal, verbal, non-verbal, business terminology, direct and indirect, approaches and evaluation), successful human relations (motivation, personality, human emotions, self-esteem, perception, human relations skills, stress), etiquette (personal grooming, dress, suitable greetings, general etiquette and protocol, and telephone etiquette), inter-cultural communication and written communication (correct style, letter writing, seminars, memos) deportment, proper and correct behaviour.	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 50%.

Second Semester

Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Tourist Destinations N5	The countries listed below are studied as tourist destinations with all relevant tourist information learned: African countries, Indian Ocean Islands, United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 50%.
Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Travel Services N5	Fares within Africa (organisations, IATA conference areas, map work, landing rights, restricted flights, time differences, actual flying time, manual air ticket, conjunction tickets, point-to-point fares, rerouting, PTA; SCCCCF and BSP.)	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 60%.

Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Travel Office Procedures N5	Financial record-keeping: cash receipts and payments journal, debtors and creditors journal, petty cash journal, balancing systems, source documents, posting to the ledger, trial balance, income statement, balance sheet and bank reconciliation. Principles of South African Law: Law of contracts, contracts of purchase and sale.	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 50%.
Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Tourism Communication N5	Dealing with enquiries, complaints and conflict (humane treatment, sexual harassment). Written Communication (enquiries, complaints, brochures, job application, reports, and itineraries). Presentation Communication (oral communication skills, listening skills, conversation, forms of address, informal speeches, presentations and public speaking, interviews, the seminar, graphic and audio visual aids in communication). Advertising (writing of advertisements, notices). Organisational Communication (formal in organisations, informal, meeting procedures).	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 50%.

Third Semester

Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Tourist Destinations N6	The countries listed below are studied as tourist destinations with all relevant tourist information learned: Western Europe, Southern Europe, Middle East and the United States of America.	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 50%.

Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Travel Services N6	Car Hire (tariffs, insurance, procedure and documentation). Foreign currency (foreign travel allowance, ways of carrying money overseas, exchange rate, buying and selling foreign currency, transferring money). Travel insurance (packages and options, conditions, motor home packages, documentation). Special international travel (types of trains, types of services, rail, ferry, cruises and documentation). Hotel reservations (terminology, accommodation manuals). Tour planning and budgeting (IATA regulations, Group Tours, Incoming Tours, fares and costing).	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 70%.
Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Travel Office Procedures N6	Marketing and sales: business travel, selling business travel, client profile and incentive travel. Public Relations: introduction, media publicity, communication with the press, advertising media and sales promotions. Public relations in a hotel.	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 50%.
Subject	Learning objectives	Assessment criteria
Hotel Reception N6	Hotel organisation: different organisational structures in the hotel industry, functions and services provided by reception, rooms division, TGCSA. The hotel receptionist: personal qualities, personal appearance, dealing with enquiries and complaints, communication with guests. Reception: area layout, brochures and tariff structures, hotel receptions terms, billing, reservations, reception duties, registration, room status, notifications and records, travel agents and groups. Legal aspects: booking contracts, liability and the liquor act. Non-payment by guests. Price display, overbooking, rights of hotelier.	Internal evaluation on a continual basis by means of assignments, class and semester tests and the compilation of a portfolio that constitutes the semester mark. Final external examination set by the DHET at the end of the semester. Marks added together on 40:60 bases for final promotion mark. Pass mark is 50%.

Addendum E: Letter from Boland College Campus Manager

DATE: 4 FEBRUARY 2012

DEAR SIR / MADAM

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that Claudia Swart (persal number 21710236) is a staff member at Boland College and currently busy with a research thesis with the title: An analysis of the tourism curriculum at Boland College: What the tourism industry requires from entry level employees.

Claudia Swart will be conducting research by contacting stakeholders in the tourism industry in Stellenbosch and interviewing them to obtain data for her thesis.

Kind Regards



NOMALIZO MTYELA
Campus Manager: Stellenbosch Campus

Addendum F: Ethics committee approval notice

Approval Notice

New Application

15-Mar-2013

SWART, Claudia

Protocol #: DESC_Swart2013

Title: An analysis of the tourism curriculum of the Boland College: What the tourism industry requires from entry level employees.

Dear Miss Claudia SWART,

The New Application received on 11-Mar-2013, was reviewed by members of Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities) via expedited review procedures on 14-Mar-2013 and was approved. Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:

Protocol Approval Period: 14-Mar-2013 -13-Mar-2014

Standard provisions

1. The researcher will remain within the procedures and protocols indicated in the proposal, particularly in terms of any undertakings made in terms of the confidentiality of the information gathered.
2. The research will again be submitted for ethical clearance if there is any substantial departure from the existing proposal.
3. The researcher will remain within the parameters of any applicable national legislation, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of research.
4. The researcher will consider and implement the foregoing suggestions to lower the ethical risk associated with the research. You may commence with your research with strict adherence to the abovementioned provisions and stipulations.

Please remember to use your protocol number (DESC_Swart2013) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research protocol.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

After Ethical Review:

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) number REC-050411-032.

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki, the South African Medical Research Council Guidelines as well as the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health).

Provincial and City of Cape Town Approval

Please note that for research at a primary or secondary healthcare facility permission must be obtained from the relevant authorities (Western Cape Department of Health and/or City Health) to conduct the research as stated in the protocol. Contact persons are Ms Claudette Abrahams at Western Cape Department of Health (healthres@pgwc.gov.za Tel: +27 21 483 9907) and Dr Helene Visser at City Health (Helene.Visser@capetown.gov.za Tel: +27 21 400 3981).

Research that will be conducted at any tertiary academic institution requires approval from the relevant parties. For approvals from the Western Cape Education Department, contact Dr AT Wyngaard (awyngaard@pgwc.gov.za, Tel: 0214769272, Fax: 0865902282, <http://wced.wcape.gov.za>).

Institutional permission from academic institutions for students, staff & alumni. This institutional permission should be obtained before submitting an application for ethics clearance to the REC.

Please note that informed consent from participants can only be obtained after ethics approval has been granted. It is your responsibility as researcher to keep signed informed consent forms for inspection for the duration of the research.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 0218089183.

Included Documents:

Research proposal
DESC form
Informed consent
Permission letter
Questionnaire
Informed consent
Permission letter
Questionnaire

Sincerely,

Susara Oberholzer
REC Coordinator
Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

Some of the responsibilities investigators have when conducting research involving human participants are listed below:

1. **Conducting the Research.** You are responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC approved research protocol. You are also responsible for the actions of all your co-investigators and research staff involved with this research. You must also ensure that the research is conducted within the standards of your field of research.
2. **Participant Enrollment.** You may not recruit or enroll participants prior to the REC approval date or after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials for any form of media must be approved by the REC prior to their use. If you need to recruit more participants than was noted in your REC approval letter, you must submit an amendment requesting an increase in the number of participants.
3. **Informed Consent.** You are responsible for obtaining and documenting effective informed consent using only the REC-approved consent documents, and for ensuring that no human participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their informed consent. Please give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents. Keep the originals in your secured research files for at least five (5) years.
4. **Continuing Review.** The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research protocols at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is no grace period. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, it is your responsibility to submit the continuing review report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur. If REC approval of your research lapses, you must stop new participant enrollment, and contact the REC office immediately.
5. **Amendments and Changes.** If you wish to amend or change any aspect of your research (such as research design, interventions or procedures, number of participants, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material), you must submit the amendment to the REC for review using the current Amendment Form. You may not initiate any amendments or changes to your research without first obtaining written REC review and approval. The only exception is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.
6. **Adverse or Unanticipated Events.** Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to Malene Fouch within five (5) days of discovery of the incident. You must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the RECs requirements for protecting human research participants. The only exception to this policy is that the death of a research participant must be reported in accordance with the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee

Standard Operating Procedures. All reportable events should be submitted to the REC using the Serious Adverse Event Report Form.

7. Research Record Keeping. You must keep the following research related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research protocol and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence from the REC
8. Reports to Sponsor. When you submit the required reports to your sponsor, you must provide a copy of that report to the REC. You may submit the report at the time of continuing REC review.
9. Provision of Counselling or emergency support. When a dedicated counsellor or psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.
10. Final reports. When you have completed (no further participant enrollment, interactions, interventions or data analysis) or stopped work on your research, you must submit a Final Report to the REC.
11. On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits. If you are notified that your research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, you must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

Addendum G: Informed Consent Form



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

An analysis of the tourism curriculum at Boland College: What the tourism industry requires from entry level employees.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Claudia Swart (MPhil in Higher Education), from the Education Department at Stellenbosch University. Results obtained from the study will contribute to the above named the thesis. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a stakeholder in the Stellenbosch Tourism industry and students from Boland College has worked at your establishment in the past.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To establish to what extent the current national tourism curriculum is aligned with local Stellenbosch tourism industry needs.

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Participate in an interview by the researcher (Claudia Swart) to establish what you think the strong and weak points of students from Boland College are and what Boland College can do to address possible gaps identified.

Fifteen role-players from the Stellenbosch Tourism industry will be identified and interviewed.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

None.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

To identify possible gaps in the national tourism curriculum in order to better prepare students for work in the tourism industry.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

None.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained as the names of participants will not be made public and all data kept in a locked office/house.

The interview will be audio taped in order to transcribe data for inclusion in the thesis. Participants have the right to review and edit tapes at any time. The researcher and supervisor of the study will have access to the tapes and all information will be used for educational purposes only. Tapes will be erased upon completion of the study.

The researcher aims to publish the results of the study in order to replicate the study in other areas and possibly submit the report to the Department of Higher Education and Training. The names of participants will not be made public.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Prof E Bitzer . *Include day phone numbers and addresses for all listed individuals. For greater than minimal risk studies, include night/emergency phone numbers.*

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to [*me/the subject/the participant*] by Claudia Swart in [*Afrikaans/English*] and [*I am/the subject is/the participant is*] in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to [*me/him/her*]. [*I/the participant/the subject*] was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to [*my/his/her*] satisfaction.

[*I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study/I hereby consent that the subject/participant may participate in this study.*] I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Subject/Participant

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the subject/participant*] and/or [his/her] representative _____ [*name of the representative*]. [*He/she*] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [*Afrikaans/*English/*Xhosa/*Other*] and [*no translator was used/this conversation was translated into* _____ by _____].

Signature of Investigator

Date

Addendum H: Hotel Reception N6 Syllabus

Republic of South Africa
Post-School Vocational Education: Technical Colleges
Hotel Reception N6 Syllabus
Code number: 04061066
Date of implementation: January 1995
Date of first examination: June 1995
Updated 1998.01

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1. Aims

1.1 General aims

To prepare professional receptionists who can accurately and efficiently perform the duties and functions of a hotel receptionist, and can thereby project and contribute to the image: 'Excellence in service' in the accommodation industry.

1.2 Specific aims

- To inculcate in students a realisation of the responsibility of the hotel receptionist as the first contact with guests visiting the hotel
- To introduce students to the organisation of a hotel and provide them with insight into the interdependence of various departments in the hotel
- To familiarise students with the grading and classification system of the accommodation industry in South Africa
- To inculcate in students the qualities of a good receptionist and the importance of immaculate grooming
- To equip students with the knowledge and skills to answer enquiries and to deal with complaints tactfully
- To familiarise students with the terminology used in the accommodation industry and to equip them with a thorough knowledge of the terminology required to perform the functions of a hotel receptionist efficiently
- To equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to render effective services at the front desk
- To equip students with sufficient practical experience to utilise front desk equipment with confidence
- To prepare receptionists who have a basis understanding of consumer behaviour and who can recommend and sell services that will meet the needs of guests in the accommodation industry
- To equip students with the necessary knowledge of legal regulations pertaining to the accommodation industry

2. Resources required

Educational institutions wanting to offer this instructional offering must provide the following:

- A reliable range of sources readily available to the lecturer and students at all times
- Recommended sources for lecturers and students are:
 - Any reliable source that covers the prescribed learning content. (A list of suggested sources is contained in Addendum 1)
 - Lecturers should also obtain the latest information/brochures from SATOUR about the **National Grading and Classification Scheme**
 - It is also recommended that a staff member from the Standard Division of SATOUR lectures the class on themes from Module 1 and 4.

3. Duration of instruction and lecturing time

The instructional offering is presented for one full-time semester (5 hours per week for 17 weeks). It may also be presented on a part-time basis.

4. Evaluation

4.1 Internal evaluation

Evaluation takes place on a continual basis by means of assignments, class tests, module tests and performance in the work situation.

4.1.1 Theoretical components

Besides the normal class tests as continuous evaluation, **THREE** formal tests of **at least** 100 marks each are taken. The average of these theory test marks is calculated to mark out of 30 for the contribution of the theoretical components of the semester mark.

4.1.2 Practical components

With the help of the measuring instrument, a practical mark is allocated after the completion of each module. The student's proved achievement during experience in practice (employer's evaluation: tick sheet) and practical work (portfolio and assignments) are considered. The assessment of the portfolio will be as follows:

- (a) Correctness of the information: 70%
- (b) Logical, systematic presentation: 30%

The average of these practical marks is calculated to a mark out of 70 for the contribution of the practical components to the semester mark. The contents of the semester test are the same as for the final examination.

4.1.3 Semester marks

A semester mark of at least 40% must be obtained before a candidate will be allowed to sit for the examination. The semester mark out of 100 is calculated and is compiled from the theoretical and practical marks of the internal evaluation added together on a 30:70 basis. The semester marks counts 40% and the examination mark 60% of the final promotion mark.

The semester mark out of 100 must be submitted on the prescribed form before or on the prescribed date, to the relevant examining body.

4.2 Examining

4.2.1 General information

The examinations of this instructional offering on the N6 level will be conducted externally. The question paper will be set, marked and moderated externally.

The application of the skills of hotel reception is of vital importance in the hotel industry. Practical application in the form of case studies will, therefore, form part of the examination papers.

Recall, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation of learning content are important aspects in ascertaining a student's knowledge and understanding of the learning content of the instructional offering. The following weights are consequently awarded to each category:

Recall	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
20 – 30	55 – 65	10 – 20	5 – 10	5 – 10

One three-hour paper for a total of 200 marks will be set at the end of the semester. The emphasis will be on the practical application of the learning content as it is required in the work situation.

4.2.2 Pass requirements

To pass Hotel Reception N6, a candidate should obtain a final mark of 50% when the year mark and examination mark are added together, subject to a sub-minimum of 40% in the examination.

4.2.3 Examination papers

Particulars of paper:

Nature of papers	External
Type of paper	Conventional
Number of papers	1
Duration of paper (in hours)	3
Total mark allocation	200
Number of sections	2
Elective questions (Section B)	4 out of 5
Mark allocation per section	
Section A (short questions)	40
Section B (medium and long questions)	160

The demarcation of work and types of question for each section are as follows:

Section A (40)

Ready knowledge, concept and application will be tested in this section in the form of short questions and covers all the modules:

Estimated analysis of test items for Section A	Marks and Percentage
Ready knowledge	24 (60%)
Conception and application	16 (40%)
Total mark allocation	40 (100%)

Section B (160)

This section tests knowledge, concept, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation in the form of questions of medium and extended length and covers all the modules. A total 4 out of 5 questions of 40 marks each should be answered.

Estimated analysis of 40-mark questions	Marks and percentage
Knowledge	10 (25%)
Concept	4 (10%)
Application	16 (40%)
Analysis, synthesis and evaluation	10 (25%)
Total mark allocation	40 x 4

4.3 Evaluation of practical work

Practical work must be kept in the Hotel Reception Portfolio and assessment will be as follows:

- (a) Correctness of the information: 70%
- (b) Logical, systematic presentation: 30%

(Untidy work on documents will be penalised.)

5. General information and information concerning the practical component

- 5.1 The visual presentation and practical application of the learning content on hotel reception as well as relevant work experience form the basis for mastering the learning content of this instructional offering.
- 5.2 Ready knowledge of hotel organisation, the hotel receptionist, reception and legal aspects regarding the hotel industry adds to a better equipped hotel receptionist able to render even better services to the touring public.
- 5.3 Students will have to compile a complete portfolio of the hotel reception studied and performed in practice. This portfolio can be used when they apply for a post.

6. Experiential learning

Arrangements must be made with local hotels/guest houses/country inns/game lodges for students to follow a co-operative education programme. A period of at least three months during the 18/24 months of the tourism instructional programme is highly recommended. The nature of the observation and work during the experiential period will depend on the knowledge and skills of the student, the type of accommodation enterprise in the local area, and the relationship between the college and such enterprises.

7. Module weights

The modules for Hotel Reception N6 comprise the following (weight per module out of 100 between brackets):

7.1	Hotel organisation	(10)
7.2	The hotel receptionist	(10)
7.3	Reception	(65)
7.4	Legal aspects	(15)
	Total	(100)

The weight of the modules out of 100 indicates the relative importance thereof with regard to the teaching time allocated as well as to the relative examination value of each module.

8. Detailed syllabus

The detailed syllabus and accompanying learning objectives Hotel Reception N6 are as follows:

Module 1: Hotel Organisation

1. Different organisation structures in the hotel industry

- 1.1 Describe how the hotel industry is organised in general by differentiating between the different categories of hotels with reference to international corporate hotels, major national hotels companies, small hotel groups, independent hotels and hotel consortiums.
- 1.2 Identify the major South African Hotel Groups and name one hotel in each group.
- 1.3 Explain and illustrate the different organisation structures of small, medium and large hotels with the aid of diagrams.

2. Functions and services provided by the reception office

- 2.1 Explain the functions and services of the reception department and list the main tasks.
- 2.2 Draw an organisation structure chart/diagram of the functions of the front office.

3. The different departments and responsibilities of each department in the rooms division.

- 3.1 Explain with the aid of a diagram how the rooms division is organised in a large hotel.
- 3.2 List the tasks of the employees in each department with reference to hours and shifts, telephones, advance reservations, reception, cashier, porter, valet, kiosk and housekeeping.

4. The new national grading and classification scheme in South Africa

- 4.1 Describe the star grading programme applicable to the main categories of accommodation.
- 4.2 Explain the application of the grading and classification scheme.
- 4.3 List the main benefits of the scheme.
- 4.4 Name and locate the five star accommodation establishments in SA.

Didactic Directives

1. With reference to theme 1.2 regarding major SA Hotel Groups and examples, refer to the annual Licensee's Guardian of the specific year for up to date examples.
2. Take note of the difference between organisation structures only and the organisation structure of the front office/rooms division of small, medium and large accommodation establishments.
3. With reference to the national grading and classification scheme in South Africa, lecturers should obtain and provide students with the latest information recorded in the Satour Accommodation Guide.

Module 2: The Hotel Receptionist

1. The personal qualities of a good hotel receptionist

- 1.1 Compile a list of the main attributes and desirable qualities of a good hotel receptionist.

2. Personal appearance

- 2.1 Justify the following statement: "Attention to personal appearance and hygiene are of the utmost importance to a receptionist."
- 2.2 Apply the above statement to job situations in the front office by means of role-play or simulated situations.

3. Dealing with enquiries and complaints in the front office

- 3.1 State briefly how to deal with verbal enquiries of guests.
- 3.2 Give an overview of the enquiries that are usually dealt with by the reception desk.
- 3.3 Given a case study on verbal enquiries of guests in the front office, list and explain the main points to follow when dealing with a guest complaint.
- 3.4 List the reference material that should be available in an efficiently organised reception office to deal with the varied enquiries of guests.
- 3.4 Apply the concepts studied in this theme to job situations by means of simulated situations in the front office.

4. Communication with guests

- 4.1 List the main methods of non-verbal communication in the front office.
- 4.2 Justify the following statement: "Good verbal communication is essential in most jobs but rarely does it play such an important part as in the reception office."
- 4.3 Give a brief overview of the documents in common use for external communication in the front office.
- 4.4 Compile a list of simple rules which will help the receptionist develop a good telephone manner and technique.
- 4.5 Explain the use of telephone communications in the front office.
- 4.6 Describe the use of the public address system in specific job situations.
- 4.7 Apply the concepts studied in this theme to job situations by means of role-play or simulated situations, with specific reference to the hospitality industry.

Module 3: Reception

1. Area layout

- 1.1 Illustrate with the aid of a diagram the simple layout of the reception area.
- 1.2 List the items that should be checked by the staff on reporting for duty in order to keep the reception area immaculate at all times.
- 1.3 State the basic rules of behaviour which the management expect their reception staff to follow.

2. Brochures and tariff structures

- 2.1 Define the use of brochures.
- 2.2 Define tariff.
- 2.3 Compare the brochures of different categories of accommodation establishments in SA with specific reference to what sector of the market it is aimed at and the tariff.

3. Hotel reception terms

- 3.1 Define, interpret and apply hotel reception terms.

4. Basic reception duties during the various shifts.

- 4.1 Explain in detail all the basic reception duties that have to be carried out
 - (a) On the morning shift (08:00 – 15:00)
 - (b) On the evening shift (15:00 – 23:00)

5. Reservations

- 5.1 Methods of booking a reservation
 - 5.1.1 Identify and briefly describe the methods by which a reservation may be communicated.
- 5.2 Recording the reservation
 - 5.2.1 List the details and information required to process a booking/reservation.
 - 5.2.2 Briefly state the benefits of the reservation form.
 - 5.2.3 State the purpose of the advance reservation chart, density chart and the hotel diary.
 - 5.2.4 Show how the different sources of reservations are recorded and charted prior to the guest's arrival, in small, medium and large accommodation establishments, using the reservation form, advance reservation chart, density chart, stop-go chart and the hotel diary, by completing these using given information.
- 5.3 Other methods of recording reservations
 - 5.3.1 Given specimens of the charts, identify and describe the operation and purpose of the charts used in the rack system (Whitney).
 - 5.3.2 Explain the operation of the Central Reservation System.
- 5.4 Confirming reservations
 - 5.4.1 Identify and briefly describe the various methods used to confirm reservations.
 - 5.4.2 Draft a suitable reply to confirm a guest's reservation.
 - 5.4.3 Complete the standard confirmation forms showing reservation details as necessary.
 - 5.4.4 Explain the implications of the extra information (small print) usually printed on the confirmation slip.
- 5.5 Status of reservations
 - 5.5.1 Briefly explain the following:
 - (a) 6 pm release
 - (b) T or P (take or place)

- (c) Guaranteed arrival
- (d) VIPs or CIPs
- (e) Room nights
- (f) Commissionable bookings
- (g) 'Back to back' reservations
- (h) Airline and travel agents guaranteed reservations

6. Check-in/out of guests

6.1 Registration

- 6.1.1 List the traditional methods of registration of guests.
- 6.1.2 Compare the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods of registration.
- 6.1.3 List the information needed when an alien registers and complete an alien form.
- 6.1.4 Describe the procedure that must be followed when receiving
 - (a) guests with reservations
 - (b) chance guests.
- 6.1.5 Describe the characteristics of identity booklets/key cards issued to guests on arrival.
- 6.1.6 Complete registration cards with given information and check cards for possible mistakes.

6.2 Room status

- 6.2.1 Define the need for a room status system.
- 6.2.2 Name and describe the operation of the following room status systems:
 - (a) Bedroom book
 - (b) Bed sheet
 - (c) Whitney system: room board and room status rack
 - (d) Electronic room status boards
- 6.2.3 Apply the concepts studied in this theme (6.2.) to job situations in the hospitality industry by means of case studies.

6.3 Notifications and records

- 6.3.1 Identify the lists that are prepared and kept by reception to ensure smooth operations.
- 6.3.2 Identify the staff to whom these lists should be distributed.
- 6.3.3. Describe the use and purpose of these lists prepared by reception, including the following
 - (a) Arrivals list
 - (b) Notification slips
 - (c) Change of room
 - (d) House list (alphabetical guest list)
 - (e) Departure list
 - (f) Function/tour list/ten-day forecast
 - (g) Call/papers/EMT
 - (h) Guest history cards
 - (i) Daily summary sheets
 - (j) Room history record
 - (k) Room inventory cards
 - (l) Black lists

6.3.4 Complete the above lists from given information

6.4 Letter and key racks

- 6.4.1 Name the functions of the combined letter and key racks.
- 6.4.2 List and describe the different types of keys that can be given to guests when they check in.
- 6.4.3 Explain how an electronic key system operates and name its advantages.

- 6.5 Valuables for safe-keeping
 - 6.5.1 Outline the procedure followed when accepting valuables for safe-keeping from guests.
 - 6.5.2 Outline the procedure followed when the guest wants his property back.
 - 6.5.3 Issue receipts for valuables deposited and withdrawn (complete the records that should be kept).
- 6.6 Checking out/departures
 - 6.6.1 Explain in detail the method of booking out a guest.
 - 6.6.2 Summarise the requirements a charge recording system should satisfy.
 - 6.6.3 Illustrate by means of a flow chart/diagram the information process involved in compiling a guest bill.
 - 6.6.4 State the billing systems available that facilitate the detailed recording of charges.
 - 6.6.5 Name and briefly explain the records of recording charges in accommodation establishments.
- 6.7 Travel agents, groups and tours
 - 6.7.1 Pricing and selling
 - Name the factors which will affect the price quoted for a tour.
 - Explain what a net rate is.
 - Explain the term package.
 - Explain how the tour operator and hotelier reconcile their conflicting aims in handling accommodation sales.
 - 6.7.2 Booking
 - Explain the application of the term 'cancellation deadline'.
 - Complete a group/tour booking form from given information.
 - Name the details of the booking that must be clarified with the agent before the group arrives.
 - Explain the necessity from the rooming list and name the information necessary for this list.
 - 6.7.3 Handling and billing
 - Explain and evaluate the three methods of handling group registration.
 - Explain how rooms will be allocated to the groups.
 - Name the duties of the head porter on the arrival of groups.
 - Explain in detail how accounts for groups and individual guest charges will be dealt with.
 - Compile a list of points to be checked before a package tour finally leaves.
 - Explain the procedure if a group is not leaving until the afternoon.

Didactic Directives

1. This module must be studied as one unit because the student must be able to explain the procedures following a request for accommodation until the departure of the guest. This must be done by indicating how he/she would deal with the request and by processing the reservation from arrival to the final departure of the guest(s) by identifying and completing (in the correct sequence) the necessary records.
2. Take note of the difference between the layout of the reception area, and the organisation structure diagram of the front office.
3. With reference to theme 4.1, billing documents must receive specific emphasis.
4. With reference to theme 5.2.3, the purpose or aim of the different reservation documents also define the difference among the different documents and students

should take special notice. Examples used in small, medium and large hotels should always be studied.

5. This module should be presented and/or tested in the form of CASE STUDIES, as this module almost totally refers to practical application of the duties in the front office of all types of accommodation establishments.
6. A practical component should definitely be considered after finishing module 3, theme 5.1. – 6.7.3, e.g. Refer to Computerized Reservation systems used in especially Guest Houses.

Module 4: Legal Aspects

1. Booking contracts

- 1.1 Explain the various ways in which a booking contract may come into being.
- 1.2 Name the points to which the express terms normally contained in a contract of booking will relate.
- 1.3 Explain of what significance a guest's contractual capacity to booking contract is.
- 1.4 State and explain the three ways in which a contract of booking may end.
- 1.5 Apply the concepts studied in this theme to situations in the front office by means of role-play or simulated situations.

2. Price display

- 2.1 List the information which must be provided in the notice displaying the prices.
- 2.2 Compile a typical notice displaying the prices in residential establishments.

3. Registration of guests

- 3.1 Outline the main points of law concerning the registration of guest, with reference to the Aliens Registration Act.
- 3.2 List the information required from the aliens.

4. Overbooking

- 4.1 Explain the common practice within the hospitality industry of overbooking.
- 4.2 Outline the implications and possible legal outcome of overbooking.

5. The rights of the proprietor/hotelier/innkeeper

- 5.1 State when service can be refused to a guest and briefly explain ejectment of guests and access to premises.
- 5.2 Define the Lien of guests' property.
- 5.3 Explain the significance and usage of the right of lien.

6. Liability for guests' property by an inn-keeper

- 6.1 Explain that section of the law that sets out the scope of this liability and restrictions to the kinds of property to which the liability applies.
- 6.2 Explain how a hotel can limit its liability for the loss of guests' property by referring to indemnities and notices.
- 6.3 List the points the guest must prove in order that a proprietor be strictly liable for loss or damage to the property of a guest.
- 6.4 Identify the Common law exceptions to liability.

7. Non-payment by guests

- 7.1 Illustrate defaulting by guests by means of examples.

- 7.2 Explain how the proprietor can protect himself from defaulters.
- 7.3 Propose what a receptionist should do if he/she believes a guest to be dishonest.
- 8. The hotel premises**
 - 8.1 Briefly state the significance of the following with regard to the hospitality industry:
 - (a) The Food Laws
 - (b) Public Liability
 - (c) The Workmen's Compensation Act
 - 8.2 Apply the prescriptions of the Acts studied in this theme to situations in the hospitality industry by means of role-play or simulated situations.
- 9. The Liquor Act**
 - 9.1 Identify the different types of licence and list all the examples of each type in SA.
 - 9.2 Name the general and special conditions for on- and off-consumption premises/licences.
 - 9.3 Explain and give five examples where applicable of the following with regard to liquor laws and regulations in South Africa:
 - (a) Access to premises/right of Admission
 - (b) Bar/restricted part
 - (c) Closed days
 - (d) Trading hours
 - (e) Corkage
 - (f) Premises

Addendum 1

RECOMMENDED SOURCES FOR STUDENTS AND LECTURERS

The recommended textbooks for lecturers as well as students for Hotel Reception N6 are:

- 1. Lix, Colin & Baird, Chris: *Front Office Operations*, Third edition. Pitman Publishing, London, 1988. ISBN: 0 273 02853 7.
- 2. Paige, Grace and Jane: *The Hotel Receptionist*, Second Edition. Holt, Rinehart and Winston Ltd, London, 1984. ISBN: 0 03 910521 0.
- 3. The annual edition of the user friendly *Licensee's Guardian* for the Hospitality Industry is also recommended, especially for Module 4. Ramsay Son & Parker (Pty) Ltd (Tel 021 531 1391), P O Box 180, Howard Place, PINELANDS, 7450.
- 4. Lecturers should also obtain the latest information/brochures from SATOUR about the National Grading and Classification Scheme.
- 5. Assignments, case studies and practical exercises are of the utmost importance. It is recommended that the lecturers make use of the following textbook in which a collection of the above have been put together:
Baird, Chris & Carter, Linda: *Front Office Assignments*, Pitman Publishing, London, 1988. ISBN: 0 273 02936 3
- 6. Braham, Bruce: *Hotel Front Office*. Stanley Thornes publishers Ltd. London, 1993.
- 7. BTMS